BUSINESS / B1

US keeps RP in IPR violations watchlist, cites Quiapo as notorious market

WORLD / A26

Woman facing charges of running prostitution den in Washington to force powerful clients to testify

NEWS / A8

Mike Arroyo discharged from hospital; bill seen to reach as high as P4M

WORLD / A25

Prince Harry, 3rd in line to British throne, to be sent to Iraq

Binay-Lapid battle heats up over English

PWEDE KAYA CARABAO ENGLISH?

By DJ Yap

SEN. LITO LAPID IS CONvinced he can go far with an English vocabulary composed of "yes," "no" and "ladies and gentlemen" in the high-brow circles of Makati's business district.

BINAY-LAPID/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, May 2, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 143 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Armed men seen taking Burgos' son in QC mall

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FINALLY, A LEAD IN THE DISAPPEARANCE OF Jonas Joseph Burgos.

Two days after the son of the late press freedom icon Joe Burgos mysteriously vanished in Quezon City, his family received word from eyewitnesses that he had been abducted by "military-looking" men.

ARMED/ A10

Labor rejects GMA's gift

Package includes tax break but no pay increase

By Michael Lim Ubac and Jerome Aning

WORKERS' CALLS FOR A wage increase fell on deaf ears as President Macapagal-Arroyo announced only a tax break and other non-wage benefits—most of them government policies that are already in place—to mark Labor Day yesterday at the Folk Arts Theater in Pasay City.

The only across-the-board benefit that Ms Arroyo announced would come from an executive order exempting minimum wage earners from the withholding tax.

"Because that's the only thing doable through an executive order," Ms Arroyo said in a speech before members of the

LABOR/ A20

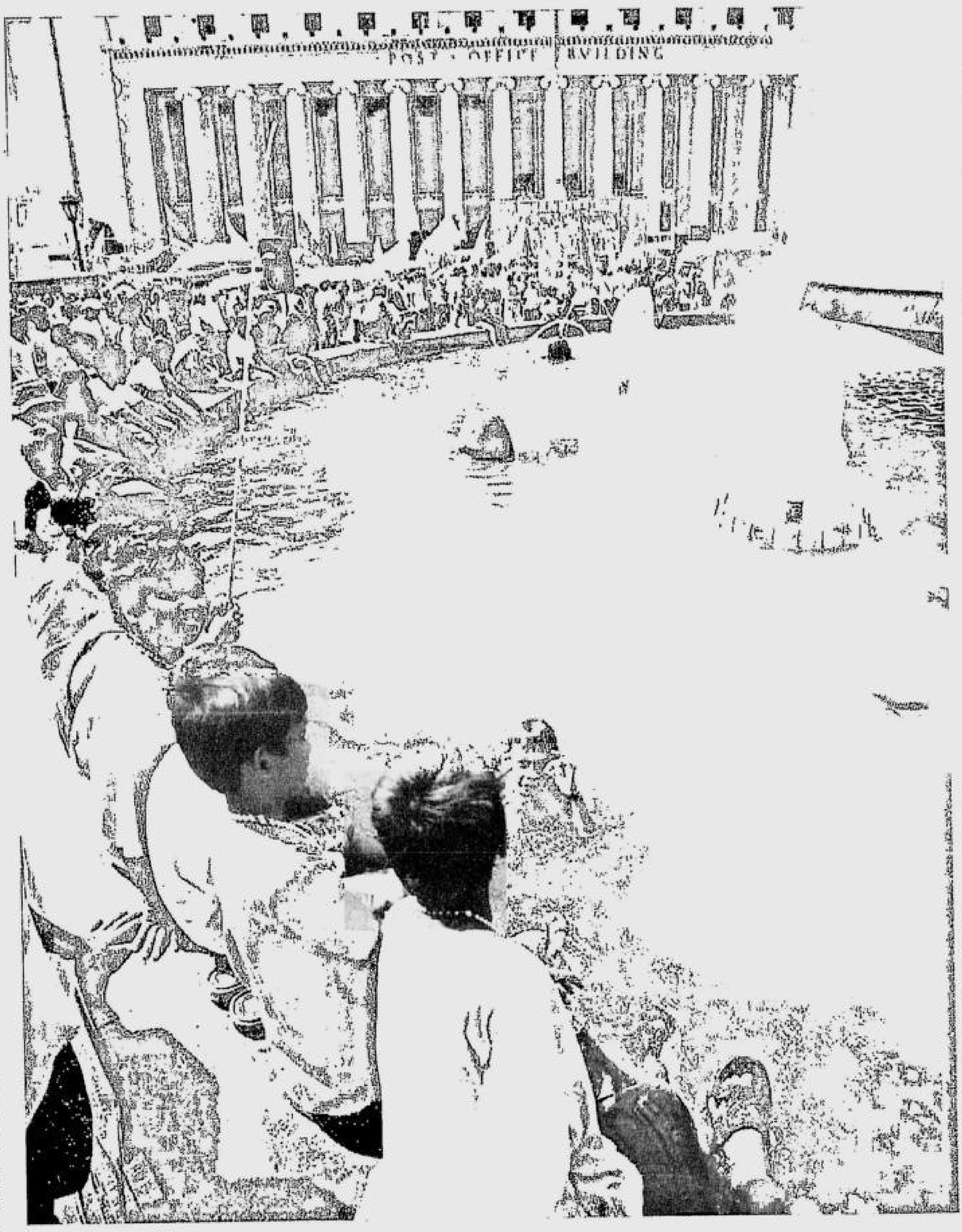
Militants hold separate rallies, remain divided

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Allison W. Lopez and Inquirer Bureaus

THE LABOR DAY RALLIES YESTERDAY were as diffused as the rainbow colors of the different groups that staged separate protests in Manila and around the country.

Personal and ideological differences and trade union "intramurals" have kept the country's labor movement from becoming a strong voice since democracy was restored in 1986, Partido ng Manggagawa Rep. Renato Magtubo said. *(See story on Page A2.)*

MILITANTS/ A20



HOT AND COLD
In the foreground, street children cool off and frolic in the fountain at Liwasang Bonifacio. At the far end, militant groups like Bayan Muna and Anakpawis are all hot under the collar espousing workers' causes on the 105th international observance of Labor Day. The labor sector in the main pressed for an across-the-board wage increase. REM ZAMORA

Salonga sees Marcos in GMA, Ver in Esperon

By Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S decision to call out the military to help police disband private armies, man 24-hour checkpoints and stop political killings has prompted ex-Senate President Jovito Salonga to warn that the May 14 elections could turn out to be as "violent and fraudulent" as the Marcos-era polls.

In an open letter sent yesterday to the President through Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Salonga called on Ms Arroyo to ensure the peace and the credibility of the midterm elections so as not to worsen current problems, including the continuing killings.

Salonga said Ms Arroyo's order for more checkpoints (*Related story on Page A10*) nationwide was "what [the dictator Ferdinand] Marcos also ordered in the 1969 elections, described by Newsweek (Nov. 24, 1969) and Time (Feb. 16, 1970) as the dirtiest, most vio-

SALONGA/ A10

Esperon: AFP to set up more checkpoints

DAVAO CITY—ARMED FORCES CHIEF of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon yesterday said the military would set up more checkpoints nationwide to augment security measures in connection with the May 14 elections.

Esperon made the announcement during a visit here, a day after President Macapagal-Arroyo called out the military to help police prevent election-related violence.

"We will be having more checkpoints to prevent armed groups" from engaging in

ESPERON/ A10

GOOD NEWS

More TV viewers preferred 'Isang Tanong' to beauty tilt

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IN WHAT MAY BE A SIGN OF Filipinos' growing political maturity, more TV viewers were found to have spent late Sunday night watching formally dressed senatorial candidates talk about corruption and political dynasties rather than ogling scantily clad women competing in a beauty contest.

Based on the AGB Nielsen Mega Manila overnight survey, GMA Network Inc.'s "Isang Tanong"—a forum that featured 13 senatorial candidates expounding on their plans and platforms—earned a viewership rating of 17 percent.

"This is high for a late-night public affairs show, especially because it was up against a beauty pageant (Miss Philippines Earth on rival ABS-CBN), which had a rating of 11.1 percent," GMA vice president

MORE/ A10

BAD NEWS

Press freedom slips in Asia

NEW YORK—COUPS, OPPRESsive governments and the outright murder of journalists were some of the reasons press freedom continued to slip in 2006, especially in Asia, Latin America and the former Soviet Union, a study released Tuesday said.

Internet restrictions were growing in places like China, Iran and Vietnam, the Freedom House study also warned. In Iran, YouTube and the English version of Wikipedia were banned in December, and "cyberdissidents" continued to be imprisoned in those three countries and elsewhere.

Coups and conflict led to drops in press freedom in Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Fiji, while almost 300 journalists and writers in Turkey were prosecuted for "insulting Turkishness," the study said.

"Press freedom is like the canary in the coal mine," said Jennifer Windsor, Freedom House's executive director.

She added: "Assaults on the media are inevitably followed by assaults on other democratic institu-

PRESS/ A10

Hero of Earth buried with full honors

By Julie M. Aurelio

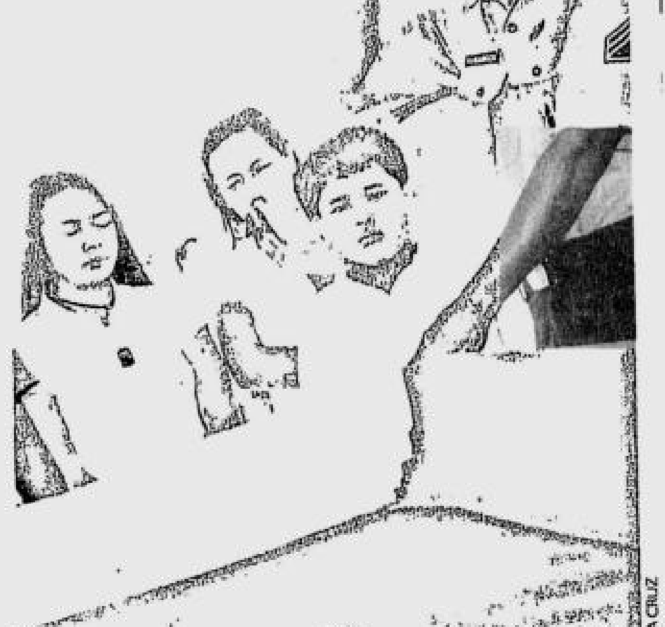
AUDY ANGCHANGCO HAD WANted so much to be a law enforcer that he sometimes ran after snatchers and petty thieves with an unlicensed gun in hand, friends recalled.

He fulfilled his dream when he joined the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as a special investigator going after illegal loggers and poachers. He was relentless. He was so passionate in carrying out his duties that it cost him his life.

On April 22, a man on a motorcycle shot the 42-year-old Angchangco 11 times as he stepped outside his house in Lucena City to see what the weather was like.

Yesterday, Angchangco was buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio and was accorded full military honors—the first environmentalist to be paid

HERO/ A21



AUGUST DELA CRUZ

AUDY ANGCHANGCO, DENR special investigator, is the 1st environmentalist buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. At the funeral Tuesday were his wife Helen, son Vince, daughter Allen.

EZ2 | SIX DIGIT
02 14 | 7 7 4 4 3 5
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
1 2 9 | 8 6 7
(All in exact order)
6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
8 11 22 28 30 40
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/01/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

IBOTO SA SENADO!
TRABAHO
GLORI

CHIN UP. With a giant Team Unity campaign poster as backdrop, an unidentified leader straightens up the face of one of Metro Manila Development Authority employees awaiting the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Gwapotel dormitory on Bonifacio Drive in Port Area, Manila.

'Impeachment is dead'

By Cynthia D. Balana

ANY THREAT OF ANOTHER IMPEACHMENT ATTEMPT against President Macapagal-Arroyo is already dead with the Genuine Opposition leaders admitting that they might not win enough seats in the House of Representatives in the May election, the administration's Team Unity said yesterday.

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, a TU senatorial candidate, said GO failed to field candidates in most congressional districts that he said were dominated by administration candidates.

The lack of GO presence in many congressional districts only proved its "scrawny grassroots machinery."

He said this was yet "another proof of GO's inability to deliver enough votes to propel its senatorial candidates to the winning circle come Election Day."

GO spokesperson Adel Tamano admitted in a press conference the other day that the opposition coalition could probably win at most 40 congressional seats on May 14.

Singson said that Tamano and Horacio Morales, one of the GO's campaign strategists, themselves acknowledged that another impeachment try was as good as dead in the next Congress.

"This is a telling mark of GO's dismal failure to muster support at the grassroots not only for its local bets but for its senatorial candidates as well," Singson said.

Tamano said that of the 140 congressional candidates fielded by the opposition, only a third were likely to win.

There are 220 congressional and up to 55 party-list seats in contention.

Singson said it was presumptuous for GO to predict that 40 of its congressional candidates were "sure winners," when the leading, and often the only, candidates contesting local posts belong to one of the six parties belonging to the ruling coalition.

These six proadministration parties are the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (CMD), (Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP), and the Liberal Party (LP) headed by Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, Team Unity spokesperson, said Filipinos still believed in the electoral system and were committed to the pursuit of a clean and orderly balloting because so many are willing to join a multisectoral campaign to ensure that the May elections are clean.

"I find comfort in this multisectoral vigilance and because of this I am very confident that this election will be a very clean, fair and honest, because after all why protect something that we believe is already corrupted?" he said.

Meanwhile, TU campaign leaders said the team would mount a four-day swing through Mindanao starting today to cap a 10-day nationwide campaign blitzkrieg covering at least nine provinces.

The 10-day campaign schedule is part of the team's final push to ensure its victory, said Vicente Sotto III, a TU senatorial candidate.

TU will woo voters in Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Misamis Oriental and Lanao del Norte, provinces in which the TU ticket is expected to score big in the senatorial derby.

With the backing of both Muslim and Christian political leaders in Mindanao, a TU sweep in the May electoral contest would no longer be surprising, Sotto said.

This week's Mindanao swing comes just five days after TU barnstormed Southern Luzon, with voters in Cavite, Laguna and Batangas showing their support for a 12 to 0 victory for the administration team.

In between the Southern Tagalog outings, TU managed to squeeze into its tight campaign schedule a one-day stop in Zambales, with TU senatorial bet Gov. Vic Magsaysay leading the group.

Last Friday, the team was in Cebu City, the second time the TU visited the city in this election campaign.

"The intensity by which TU has been conducting its campaign, and the unexampled energy being shown by its candidates, will surely carry us to our target of sweeping the polls. It is proving to be an effective tool to offset the early survey leads and popularity of the opposition," Sotto said.

"We will not rest, not until the campaign period is over. The support we've seen from the people is just overwhelming, and using that alone as basis, we are confident of our landslide victory," he added.

ELEKSYON 2007

Team Unity in Mindanao for final push

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TEAM UNITY IS RETURNING TO MINDANAO today to cap its 10-day, nine-province campaign swing that it hopes will propel it to victory in the May 14 elections.

TU senatorial candidate Tito Sotto believes Mindanao will give the administration ticket its biggest votes and the slate could even "sweep the polls."

Over the next four days, TU will visit Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Misamis Oriental and Lanao del Norte. The sortie had taken the ticket to Zambales, Southern Tagalog and Cebu.

"The intensity by which TU has been conducting its campaign—and the unequaled energy shown by its candidates—will surely carry us to our target of sweeping the polls. It is proving to be an effective tool to offset the early survey leads and popularity of the opposition," Sotto said.

He said he used to question how the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. could have received no votes in one Maguindanao town in the 2004 presidential election. Sotto was allied with Poe then.

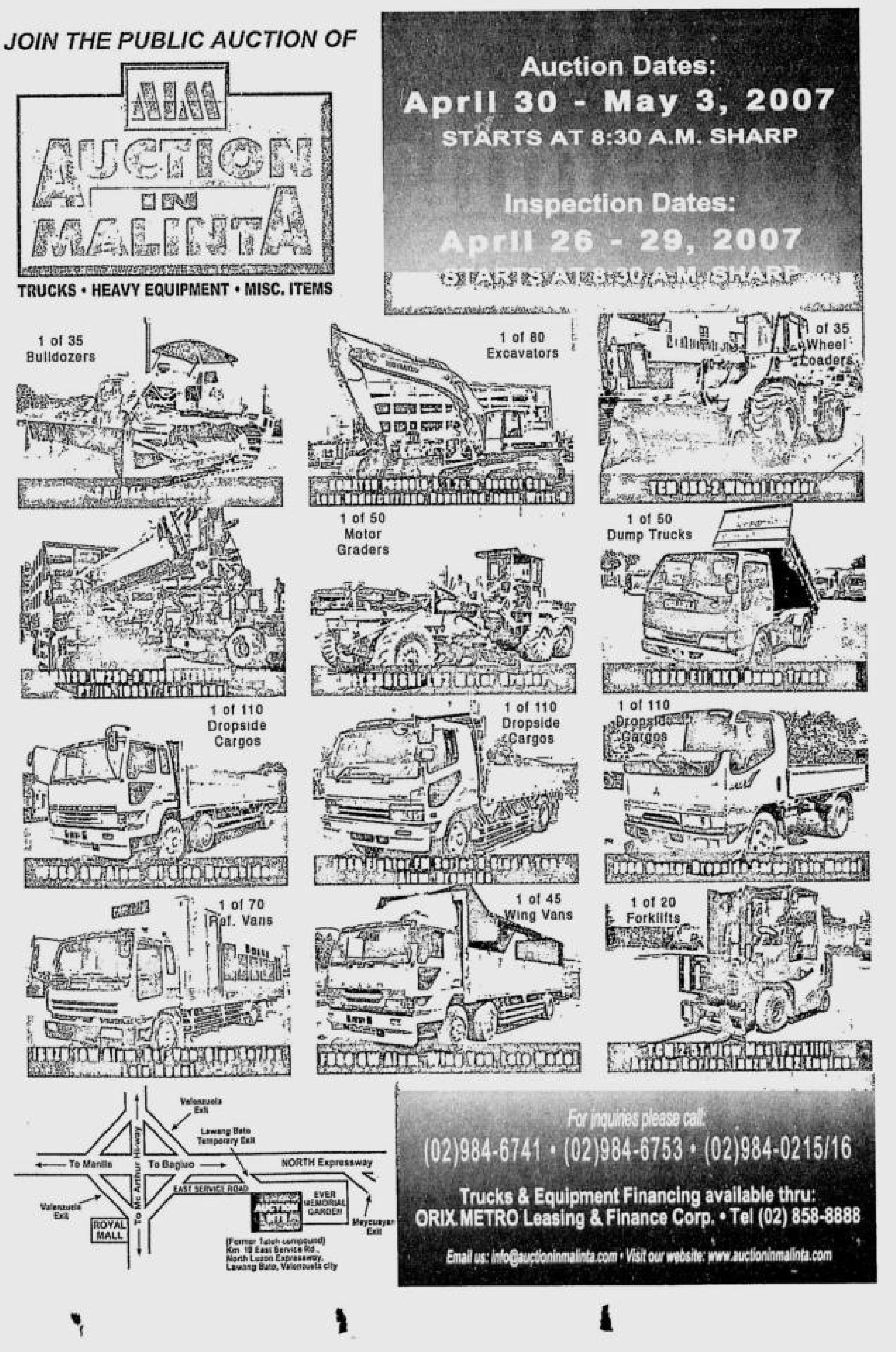
But during a recent meeting with Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Sotto said he was introduced to the Maguindanao mayor whose town did not give Poe a single vote.

"I saw for myself how powerful the command vote is in Mindanao, which is the key advantage of having a political machine which we did not have when we were with FPJ (Poe)," he said.

"Governor Ampatuan promised us a sweep and we expect that to happen in Mindanao," Sotto added.

Fellow TU bet Tessie Aquino-Oreta said the ticket was employing President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign strategy of returning repeatedly to vote-rich areas to show the people that she cared for them.

"She went several times to Pangasinan, Cebu and Mindanao and her efforts showed in the 2004 elections," Oreta said.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LABOR DAY POSER

Workers' vote still a work in progress

By Jerome Aning

YES, THERE IS A WORKERS' VOTE.

But transforming this vote into a force to reckon with, especially during an election, was still a "work in progress," a labor leader said yesterday.

Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) Rep. Renato Magtubo said labor leaders' personal and ideological differences, as well as trade union "intramurals," were keeping the country's labor movement from becoming a strong voice during elections since democracy was restored in 1986.

The lawmaker said it would take a long time for labor groups, particularly the left-leaning or progressive ones, to amalgamate and form a viable political party similar to the ruling Labour Party in the United Kingdom.

"It's very hard to organize labor groups to work as one to secure the victory of a candidate," Magtubo told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview.

Joshua Mata, secretary general of the Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL), agreed with this observation, adding that the victory in the party-list race of labor groups and other groups espousing workers' causes was a step towards greater involvement of laborers in national politics and governance.

"However, labor vote is still not in the level that we'd like to see," he said.

Filipino workers have yet to realize their potential in voting as a bloc.

According to Mata, the progressive labor movement accounts for two million of the country's 38-million work force.

APL claimed it was behind half of the votes gathered by the Akbayan People's Party, which has three seats in the outgoing House of Representatives.

Mata, however, admitted that the party did not merely rely on votes of workers alone, but also on the votes of their families and friends.

He said APL even campaigned among the unemployed to get votes for Akbayan.

For his part, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino president (BMP) Leody de Guzman said he believes there is a workers' vote and candidates should make labor issues part of their campaign.

"After experiencing so much hardship in the past years, workers will vote more wisely. This time, they will want to hear what candidates have to say about workers' concerns," De Guzman said.

"The candidate should explain his economic program that will solve unemployment, that will create jobs that are decent, secure and with just pay," he added.

Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) chair Elmer Labog said workers could easily influence the results of the elections if they overcome their apathy and ignorance.

"An ordinary worker should be socially aware of what is happening around him and, if he can, join a labor movement that will push for his rights," Labog said.

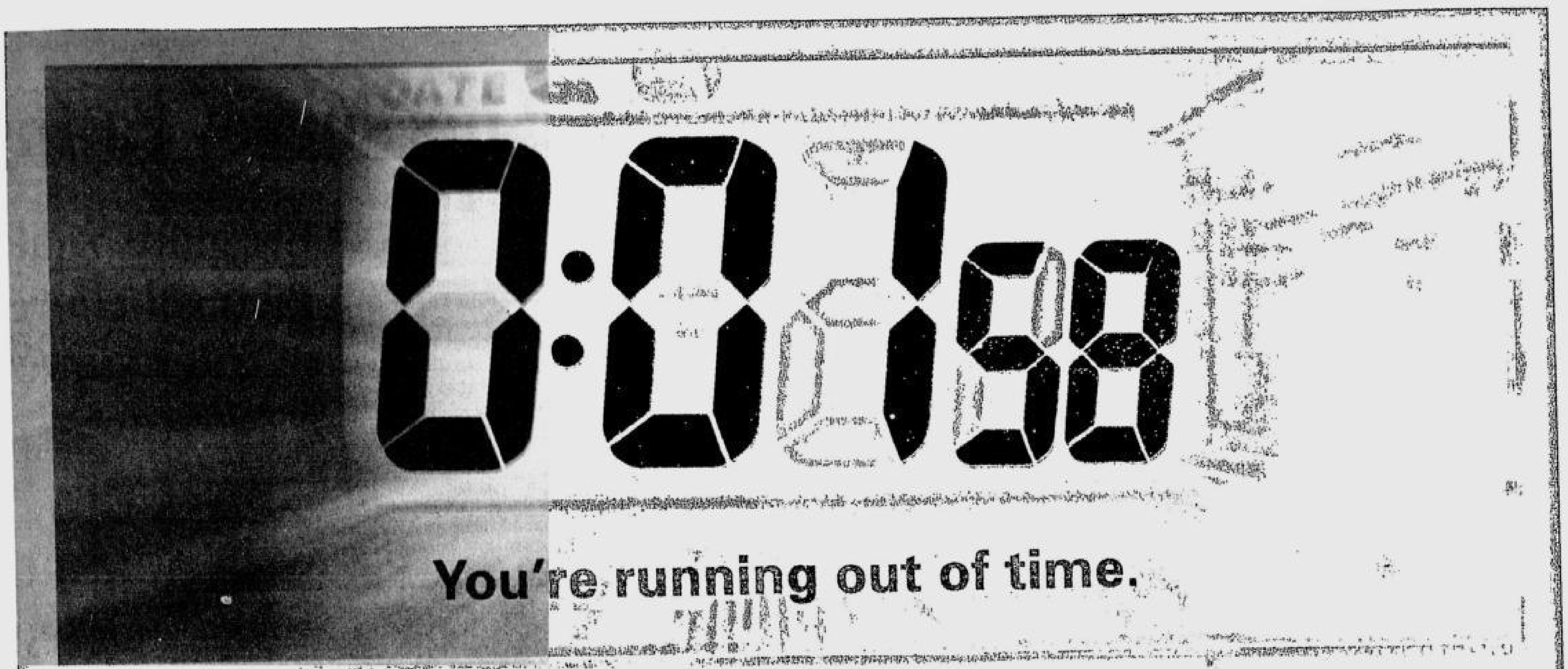
KMU is part of the Anakpawis party-list groups that occupy two seats in the House. Anakpawis and its sister parties, Bayan Muna, Gabriela, Suara Bangsamoro and Kabataan have endorsed eight candidates running for senator.

In his remarks at KMU's rally in Manila yesterday, Labog urged workers to lead in the struggle to "politically annihilate" the Arroyo administration by voting for proworker candidates.

Magtubo said labor groups could do what the Catholic Church did: It simply gave people "guidelines on whom to vote for and what to look for in a candidate."

As part of its Labor Day activities, PM had a "May Day Assembly" yesterday at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City. Workers listened to labor platforms from five senatorial candidates: Manuel Villar, Alan Cayetano, Francis "Chiz" Escudero, Anna Dominique Coseteng, Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and Antonio Trillanes IV.

Like PM and BMP, APL was not directly endorsing anyone, although it conducted a series of "job interviews" with senatorial candidates, particularly those seen as "winnable," to determine if they have a labor agenda.



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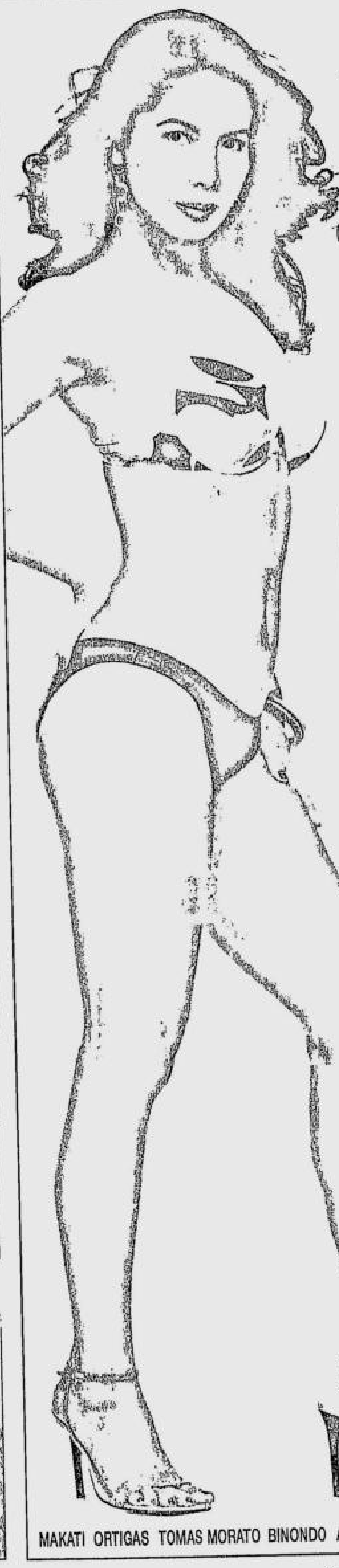

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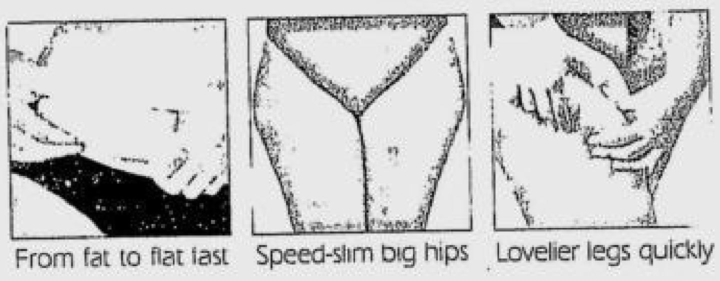

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Gringo says release boosted his survey rating

HONASAN

By Norman Bordadora

INDEPENDENT SENATORIAL CANdidate Gregorio Honasan, who is out on bail on coup d'etat charges, credits his having been able to personally campaign after being allowed to post bail as the major factor in his eight-percentage point surge in the most recent Pulse Asia senatorial preference survey.

Honasan, interviewed from Cebu City where he was campaigning yesterday, said his favorable rating was also a "tribute to his family, friends and brother Guardians who have been campaigning for me."

Honasan said he also would like for former President Joseph Estrada, Genuine Opposition candidate Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran to be allowed to post bail so they could get involved in remaining days of the campaign.

Estrada is on "rest house arrest" at his Tanay estate on plunder charges while Trillanes and Beltran are detained on separate coup d'etat and rebellion charges.

Honasan has been charged with rebellion for his alleged role in the failed July 2003 coup, also known as the Oakwood mutiny, of which Trillanes is alleged to be one of the ring leaders.

Honasan maintained that he was not part of the coup, claiming to be one of the four emissaries sent by the government to negotiate with the junior officers who had occupied the Oakwood Premier hotel.

"I was part of the solution, not part of the problem, in Oakwood," he said.

Taking note of Honasan's surge in the latest Pulse Asia survey following his release, GO spokesperson Adel Tamano renewed the opposition call for Trillanes to also be allowed to post bail.

Tamano argued that Trillanes should be granted bail since he was only the alleged implementing agent of the coup plot while Honasan was alleged to have masterminded the whole thing.

Honasan said he would neither join the Genuine Opposition nor the administration's Team Unity as both were highly polarized now and might put his campaign in jeopardy.

He would rather remain an independent than be embroiled in the continued bickering among the opposition and administration candidates, he said.

The former senator admitted he was not happy with his exclusion from the GO slate but said he did not have any ill-will against its leaders. *With Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Big gains make Pichay believer of voter surveys

PICHAY

TEAM UNITY CANDIdate Prospero Pichay is a believer of surveys, after all.

Once relegated near the tailend of the ranking in surveys of senatorial candidates belonging to the two major coalitions, the once-skeptical candidate has apparently changed his attitude toward surveys following sizeable gains in the surveys of two leading pollsters.

Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia have confirmed that the Team Unity senatorial candidate is well within striking distance of the Magic 12.

The Pulse Asia survey conducted on April 21 to 25 ranked Pichay at15th to 21st place with a voting preference of 24 percent, a significant leap of 4.2 percent from the previous Pulse Asia poll last April 3 to 5 where he logged 19.8 percent for a ranking of 19th to 22nd place.

Pichay, in a press statement, recalled that he was as far down as 35th place when the surveys started in January.

"From 35th place, I moved up to 22nd, then 19th, and now I'm in 15th," he said in a radio interview. "Maybe in the next survey, I'll be in the Magic 12."

Figures from the SWS survey conducted April 14 to 17, showed that Pichay logged the highest gain in terms of voter approval since the campaign started in February. The figures showed that he had gained 14.3 percent in approval rating since the start of the campaign.

With two weeks remaining in the campaign period, Pichay said he was confident his ranking will peak in time for the May 14 election.

"There are two morer weeks," he said. I noted that every week I gain two to three points. Last week, I rose 4.2 points. Six points more and I'll be in the Magic 12," Pichay said.

The Surigao del Sur lawmaker attributes his steady rise in voter preference to his "pro-Pinoy, pro-poor advocacy."

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Bishop slams Esperon's go-signal to AFP's voters' education

By Nikko Dizon

DAGUPAN-LINGAYEN Archbishop Oscar Cruz yesterday assailed Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. for allowing the National Capital Region Command (NCRCom) to proceed with its voters' education and awareness campaign in the run-up to the May elections.

"Don't they have anything else to do?" a bewildered Cruz told the INQUIRER by phone.

Cruz said that any voters' education program conducted by the military would always be perceived differently from a "civilian's point of view."

Moreover, Cruz said there were also concerns why the AFP voters' education would be done in Metro Manila.

If anything, the prelate said, it is the voters in far-flung provinces and rural areas that need intensive voters' education programs.

Church leaders and other sectors have criticized the NCRCom's voters' education program, stressing it was beyond the functions of the military.

Critics pointed out that the military could overstep the parameters set in the pact, noting the continued presence of soldiers in urban poor communities in Metro Manila.

Electioneering

Militant party-list organizations like Bayan Muna, Gabriela, and Anakpawis have filed charges of electioneering against Esperon and other military and government officials, claiming that soldiers have threatened their community leaders, labeled their groups as communist fronts, and have been actively campaigning against their organizations.

On Monday, Henrietta de Villa, the national chair of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), said that Esperon has given his go-signal to NCRCom's advocacy.

"He said it was good that we have it in the NCR (National Capital Region) and to go ahead (with it). But to duplicate it in other areas would not be possible at this time," Henrietta de Villa, PPCRV head, told the INQUIRER in an interview.

Ensure credibility

De Villa said she met with Esperon last Monday together with NCRCom chief Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino and Commission on Human Rights (CHR) chair Purificacion Quisumbing wherein Dolorfino presented the Covenant for H.O.P.E. (Honest, Orderly, and Peaceful Elections) to the AFP chief.

The covenant was initiated by Dolorfino as NCRCom's contribution to ensuring a credible elections in May.

De Villa said that during the meeting, CHR chair Quisumbing asked the AFP chief whether the H.O.P.E. Covenant could be implemented in other parts of the country.

Esperon, De Villa said, replied that it would be difficult to replicate it nationwide because of the limited "time frame."

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GO calls for voter vigilance

THE GENUINE OPPOSITION HAS called for continued voter vigilance in the wake of the latest Pulse Asia survey showing anti-administration forces' continued dominance over the Team Unity candidates in the polls.

GO spokesperson Adel Tamano expressed apprehension over the administration ticket's repeated pronouncements that its candidates would sweep all 12 Senate seats despite the TU's unimpressive showing in all the surveys.

"We must be vigilant against the tactics that Team GMA may resort to in order to obtain its 12-0 goal. We call on all citizens who want a new future for the Philippines to take an active part in preventing election fraud," Tamano said in a statement.

"Clearly, with elections barely two weeks to go, only massive cheating using the administration's machinery can reverse the inevitable victory of opposition senatorial candidates," Tamano said.

The Pulse Asia survey conducted from April 25 to April 27 and released on Monday showed that up to seven GO candidates have a statistical chance of winning.

A GO-commissioned Social Weather Stations survey conducted in March showed that 40 percent of Filipinos agreed with the statement that the President would engage in fraud to ensure her candidates would win. *Norman Bordadora*

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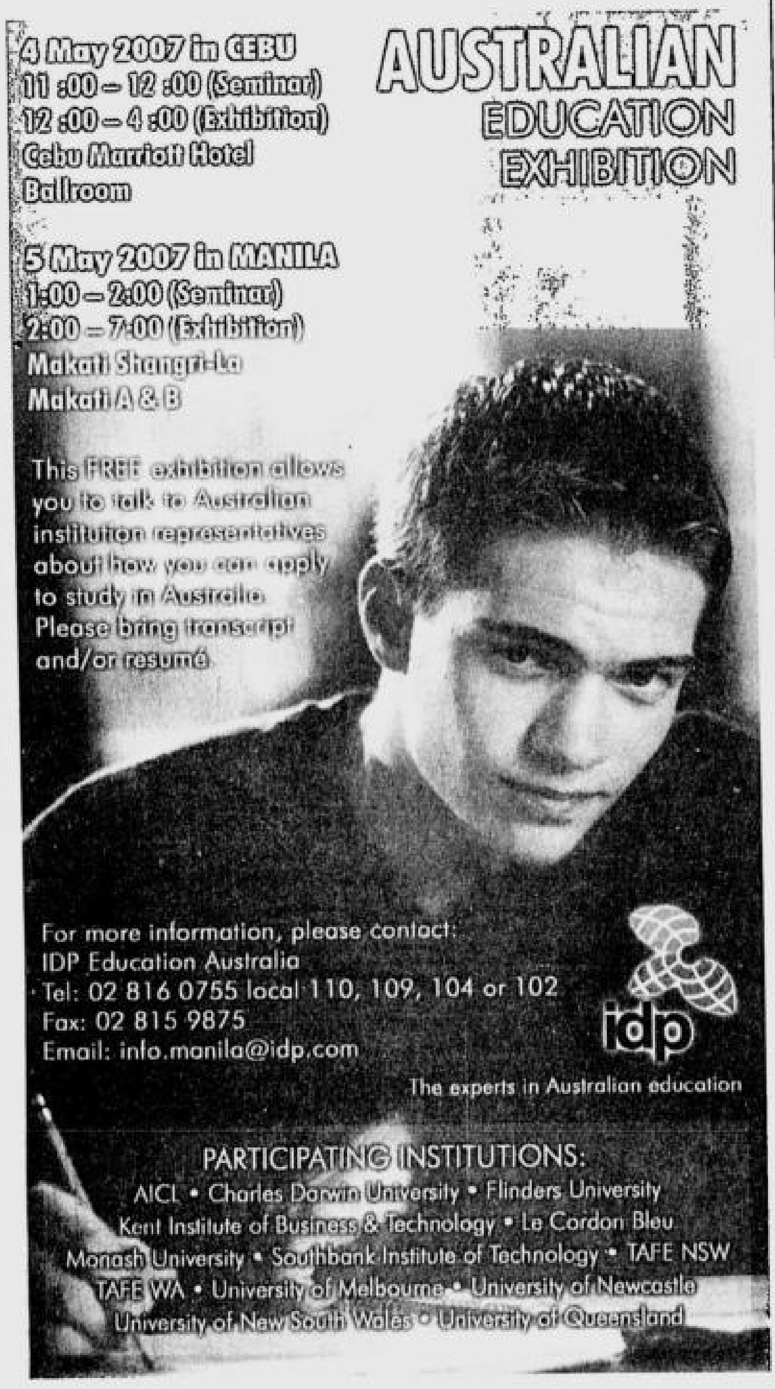

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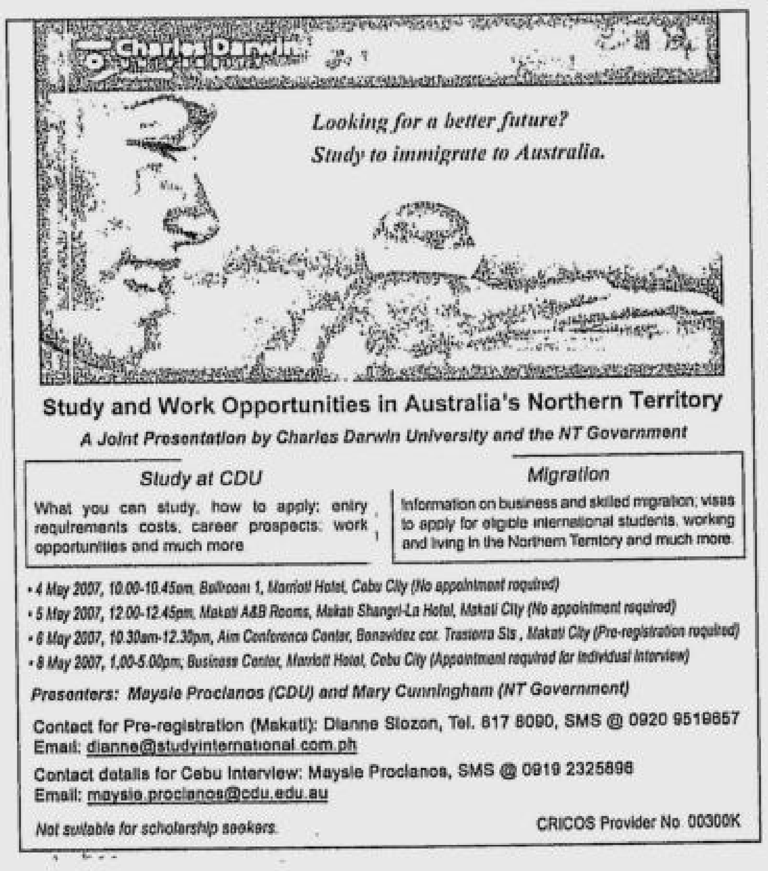

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AFP denies campaigning for Palparan

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines is not campaigning for the party-list group which has retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan for its nominee.

The military issued the denial yesterday after reports came out that some Army commanders were campaigning for the Bantay party-list group through text messages.

The messages in essence said that by voting for Bantay, communism would be wiped out. It then went to ask the recipients to pass the message to 10 other people.

AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro admitted that text messages were circulating asking for votes for a "certain party-list group" but their origin was unknown.

"We would like to highlight that there is no concerted effort on the AFP's part to campaign for the said party-list," Bacarro told reporters.

He reiterated that Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. had reminded AFP personnel not to get involved in election campaigns because it was against military regulations.

National security

Palparan hopes to represent Bantay, also known as True Marcos Loyalists, in Congress "to implement the government's national security program."

He earned the tag of "berdugo" (butcher) when he was in the active service because militants and activists tended to turn up dead or missing in areas where he was assigned.

Nothing was ever pinned on him, however, and he has denied any involvement in extrajudicial killings and abductions.

Reacting to the text campaign, the militant national fishermen's alliance Pamalakaya called it a "massive extortion of the people's (phone) load."

"Aside from electioneering and counterinsurgency, Army officers are also engaged in massive extortion by commanding Central and Northern Luzon recipients to pass the text message to 10 friends and relatives," said Gerry Albert Corpuz, Pamalakaya's information officer.

Corpuz said the soldiers themselves would be victimized when they pass on the messages.

If all the 10,000 soldiers in the Northern Luzon Command alone sent 10 messages each, this would cost P100,000, he said.

Corpuz said Pamalakaya had also received reports that members of Bantay Bayan, the Barangay Defense System and Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Units as well as rebel-returnees had been mobilized to campaign for Bantay.

'Bulong' campaign

But Palparan on Monday said these were the "marginalized sectors" that Bantay will represent in Congress.

He also denied receiving any aid, financial or otherwise, from the AFP or Malacañang. He said his campaign funds came from his family and civilian supporters.

The militant party-list group Bayan Muna, meanwhile, conducted a campaign sortie over the weekend in Mindoro where 34 of its members were killed when Palparan was assigned to the province.

"We're out to show that Palparan's brand of terrorism can never stop BM from its mission of promoting new politics," said Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño in a press conference on Monday.

None of the killings have been solved although two of them, involving Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy, are pending in the Department of Justice, Casiño said.

Palparan has consistently denied the allegations and challenged his accusers to prove their charges in court. *With Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Madonna Virola, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Comelec fixers still at work, says group

By Christian V. Esguerra

DESPITE AN IMPENDING INVESTIGATION by the Commission on Elections, a group of "big-time fixers" continues to peddle party-list accreditation and nominations for the May elections, according to a watchdog group.

"They're lying low but they're still negotiating silently," said Ameurfino Cinco, head of the Bantay RA 7941.

One case involves a group of farmers seeking representation in the next Congress.

Cinco, whose group monitors the implementation of the Party List System Law, said he has been in touch with the party-list organization since January and has been receiving information about the transaction.

As of last month, he said the standing offer was P1 million to have the group accredited, which fixers claiming to be affiliated with the Malacañang Office of External Affairs would arrange.

The group has so far paid at least P10,000 for the fixers' "day-to-day expenses."

But the transaction was aborted after the fixers' racket was exposed in the media, he said.

With the Comelec announcing that it would conduct an investigation into the alleged racket, Cinco said the fixers have dangled before the group another offer for accreditation in the 2010 party-list election.

"It's really absurd. And what's funny is that the group is following everything the fixers are saying. They're really naive," he said.

He said the fixers claim to be getting their orders "from upstairs."

Cinco earlier blew the whistle on two fixers who allegedly had connections in the OEA and the Comelec. He said he had met with them twice on the pretext that he was negotiating for the accreditation of a party-list group.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 2, 2007
4th Week of Easter
Athanasius

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Gospel: John 12:44-50

Jesus said, and even cried out, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

"If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I am not the one to condemn him; for I have come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me, and does not receive my word, already has a judge: the very word I have spoken will condemn him on the last day.

"For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has instructed me in what to say and how to speak. I know that his commandment is eternal life, and that is why the message I give, I give as the Father instructed me."

Commentary

The new ministry/mission of preaching to the Gentiles is revealed to the church while many prophets and teachers are gathered for a relief mission (care of the poor) and they fast and do liturgy. The Spirit speaks and confirms what they have begun and those gathered lay hands on them and pray over them. The two sent forth by the Spirit go with the power of the community behind them. This is one of the ways the Word continues to spread and increase.

They go to preach Jesus, the Word, the Son of the Father, so that those who see/know and believe in Jesus, will also know the Father who sent him. Once we have seen, we must obey and do the works of God. The Spirit is given to those who teach/preach/instruct-they do the work that Jesus did in the world-and those who preach are light, bringing light to others.

Cops tag San Carlos mayor's killer

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN CARLOS CITY—POLICE HAVE ALready identified one of two suspects that shot dead Mayor Julian Resuello at an auditorium where a beauty pageant was being held to mark the city's fiesta celebration Saturday night.

As the slain mayor's body was brought to his campaign headquarters here yesterday for what is expected to be a highly politicized wake and funeral, detectives fanned out in search of the suspect who they declined to identify for the moment.

Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos police director, presented to media yesterday artist sketches of the two suspects based on the description of a key witness.

A P300,000 reward, pooled by residents and officials here, has also been offered for information leading to the capture of the gunman.

Resuello's security aide, Eulogio Martinez, 41, was also shot during that fiesta incident, the latest in a growing list of election-related violence. Like Resuello, he died at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City where they were rushed after the shooting.

Supt. Manuel Velasco, head of the police's Task Force Resuello, said their witness was about three meters from where Resuello was shot and was able to recognize the suspect.

"[The witness] knows the suspect," Velasco said.

Because of the killings, the city has been placed under Commission on Elections control. Over 30 soldiers from the Ilocos Regional Mobile Group and the Army have arrived over the past two days to beef up security here.

Meanwhile, Vice Mayor Julier Resuello, the mayor's son, fought back tears as he recounted his conversation with his father on the morning of the attack.

"He called me up and asked me if I was attending the street dancing [competition]. I said, 'Yes,' but he told me not to attend [the activity] because he got information that there was an assassin out to get me," said Julier, who led about 400 supporters in an early morning mass yesterday for his slain father.

"I obeyed him," he said.

Julier is running for mayor in a switch with his father, who was running for vice mayor.

Just before the beauty pageant's coronation night, Resuello and his sons Julier and Joseres had their photo taken at the city hall. "It's something that we didn't usually do," Julier continued.

He said his father was wearing a bullet-proof vest before he entered the auditorium, but he was "very happy" that many people attended the event that he took off his vest and went around to greet them.

It proved to be a fatal mistake.

Julier, currently the vice mayor, was sworn in as city mayor by city prosecutor Alejo Salo following the death of his father. Councilor Elpidio Fermin Jr. was sworn in as vice mayor while Resuello's other son Joseres filled the vacant seat in the city council.

Julier is running for mayor against former Mayor Douglas Soriano. His brother, Joseres, will run for vice mayor, in place of their slain father.

Bataoil said they were not discounting politics as a motive because "Resuello was a mayor and a political leader, and the killing happened during the election period."

ELEKSYON 2007

Angara urges ICT training

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION technology (ICT) training in the country should be taken to the hard-core level in order to produce a vast pool of computer engineers and programmers ready for the big demand both here and overseas, Team Unity senatorial candidate Edgardo J. Angara said yesterday. Angara said the government and the private sector could tie up with multilateral institutions to establish ICT training programs. After providing the "warm bodies" for the business process outsourcing companies (call centers) in the country, there is an "urgency to step up the training for the next wave of big and high-paying ICT jobs," Angara said. He said the public schools should endeavor to build "miniature Silicon Valleys," which were key to India's making big economic strides.

Poor seek population debate

THE ABA-AKO PARTY-LIST group comprised of farmers and the urban poor has challenged candidates to engage in meaningful debates on the population issue. In a statement, ABA-AKO chair and nominee Leonardo Q. Montemayor said: "It seems that politicians are avoiding this important concern like an unwanted baby, because they are unsure or fearful of its impact on their campaign." Montemayor, a former agriculture secretary, said the view that poverty could be eradicated by limiting the population simply through birth control was "simplistic." "Poverty is first and foremost the result of social injustice. It is also brought about by other factors like the mismanagement of the economy, graft and corruption, lack of educational opportunities, over-centralization in government, and so on."

Group wants nominees bared

A GROUP THAT DESCRIBES ITSELF as being "generally supportive" of the administration is backing the activist Akbayan party-list group's legal battle against the Commission on Elections to have the names of all party-list nominees revealed. The Sulong Barangay Movement has petitioned the Supreme Court to order the disclosure of all party-list nominees' names. Failing that, Sulong Barangay through its lawyer, Rene Saguisag, said the high court should order the postponement of the party-list election. "An election where the voter does not know who would represent [him] cannot be credible," it said. Sulong Barangay's nominee is Bobby Brillante, a former Makati vice mayor and staunch foe of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay. ***Leila B. Salaverria***

'Erap, Cory magic gone'

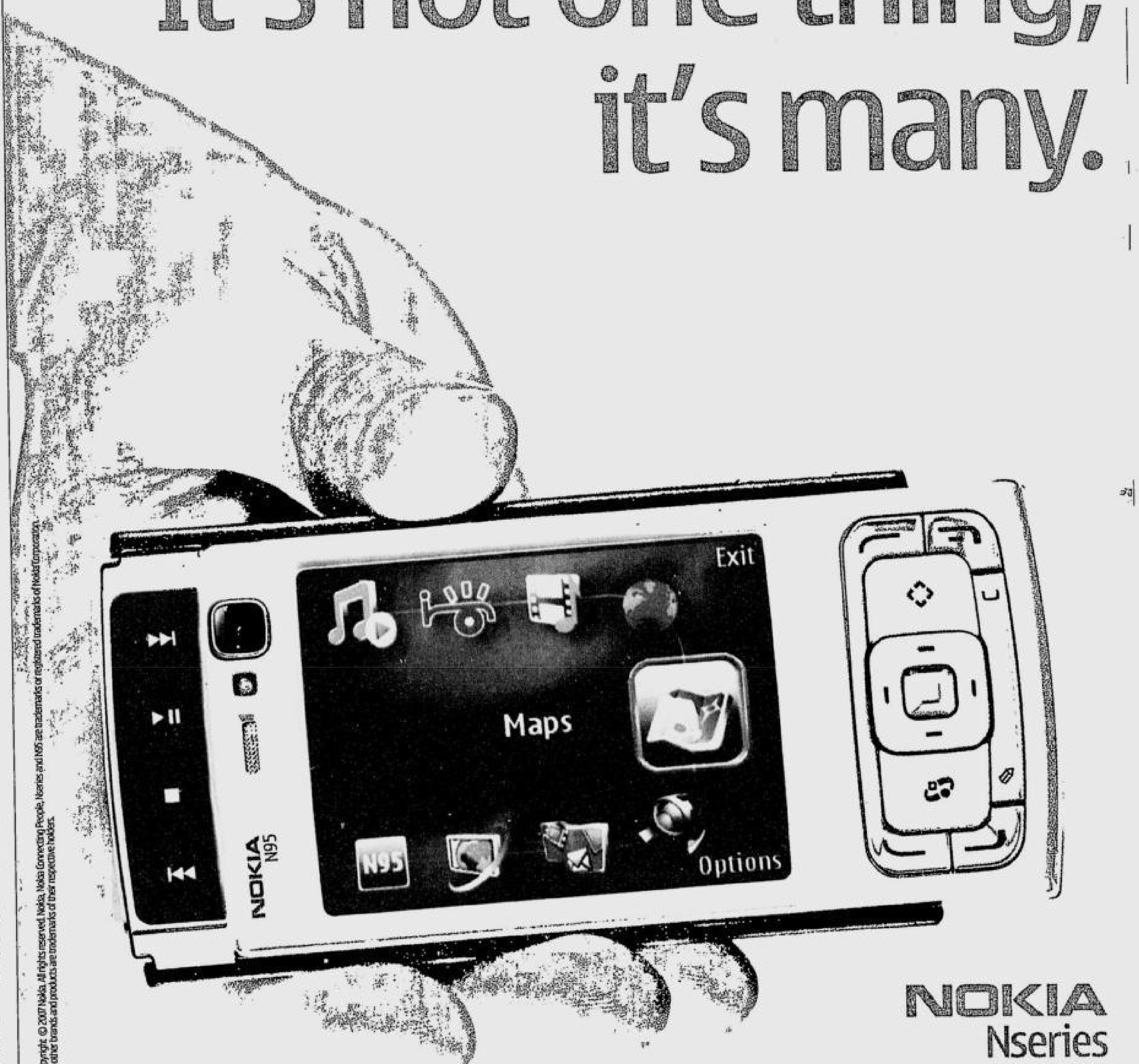
TWO ADMINISTRATION CONGRESSMEN yesterday debunked a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey that said the vaunted "magic" of former Presidents Joseph Estrada and Cory Aquino was still strong, saying this was a myth after the combined efforts of the two twice failed to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo. Representatives Douglas Cagas and Eduardo Veloso said the survey, commissioned by the opposition, was skewed for propaganda purposes. "That's the problem with surveys, more often than not their results are false because they are based on perception, not facts," Cagas said. According to Veloso: "Even Noynoy Aquino who is being endorsed by Cory is not in the Top 5 [in senatorial surveys], while John Osmeña who is backed by Estrada is nowhere near the magic 12."

Nikki bats for more health funds

GIVING CREDENCE to the popular adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," Sen. Nikki Coseteng has urged the government to take a harder look at the root of Filipinos' health problems and take concrete steps to solve them. "Most pressing of these problems," Coseteng said, "are the country's grossly inadequate annual health budget and the lack of doctors, most notably in the countryside." The World Health Organization recommends that 5 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) be allocated to the health sector. Coseteng, who is running for senator with the Genuine Opposition, said that in comparison, the Philippines' health budget is less than 2 percent of GDP. "This is tragic, it must not continue," she said. "We should allocate the funds to address the root causes of disease and other health problems. We should also find a way to motivate our doctors and nurses to remain in the country."

GO should probe Loren—Chavit

THE GENUINE OPPOSITION should also look into the reported junking of her co-candidates by Loren Legarda, the same charge the coalition hurled earlier against GO bet Manuel Villar, Team Unity senatorial candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson said yesterday. GO should do this after Villar, whose sample ballots reportedly did not include his GO teammates who are leading in the surveys, told of seeing sample ballots in General Santos City that had only Legarda's name on them, Singson said. "This finger-pointing by Villar, the latest development in a series of betrayals that now mar GO's campaign, is yet more proof of a widening crack in the opposition coalition," he said.



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MIKE ARROYO manages a wave and a wan smile as he is led out of the hospital by daughter Luli. INQUIRER PHOTO/JOAN BONDOC

Docs tell Mike A: Live in moderation

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

TWENTY-TWO DAYS AFTER UNDERGOING critical open heart surgery, President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband walked out of St. Luke's Medical Center yesterday morning with doctors' orders to manage stress and live life "in moderation."

With his only daughter Luli holding his hand, a frail-looking Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo ambled out of the hospital lobby at 10:20 a.m., opting not to use the standard hospital wheelchair.

He did not reply to queries from journalists who waited in the lobby. He only managed to say a couple of thank yous, smiled and waved to them before some of his doctors led him to his vehicle.

His attending physician, Dr. Juliet Gopez-Cervantes said Arroyo lost about 10 lb after his critical 10-hour emergency aneurysmectomy and triple bypass on April 9.

The President had left the hospital 20 minutes earlier through the hospital's backdoor to attend to a series of Labor Day activities in Manila.

Undersecretary Juris Soliman, the First Gentleman's chief of staff, said the President and two of their children—Luli and Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo—and daughter-in-law Kakai attended an 8 a.m. Mass at the hospital chapel. Then they had a final briefing with the First Gentleman's 18-member medical team before the President left.

Doctors said Arroyo would have to return to the hospital for his cardiac rehabilitation.

"He will still be going to our hospital every other day... until next week. In between he will have his rehabilitation in Malacañang," Cervantes said.

Dr. Rommel Cariño, the heart surgeon who performed the emergency operation, said Arroyo seemed raring to go back to work.

"He wanted to go back to his office but we told him he can do so after one month (from the date of his operation)," Cariño said, adding that Arroyo should slow down for a recovery period of three months.

He was sent home with strong reminders to stick to a stress-free life and a healthy diet. He has to take antihypertensive medicines.

"We have repeated time and again that he has to know how to manage stress because any form of stressful activities or sudden bursts of emotion can increase his blood pressure and make him at risk again for some problems," Cervantes said.

Asked if the 46 libel cases he filed against journalists and involvement in the campaign of the administration's Team Unity would be stressful, Cervantes said: "As much as possible we asked him to avoid anything that can make him upset or anything that is stressful. So I think if this election, as well as the libel suits, will really make him upset and put him under very stressful conditions, then we advise (him) not to (get involved)."

She was quick to add that Arroyo was the only person who can determine what activities would give him stress.

"Newspapers? As long as he knows how to be able to handle things that are written, then (he can read them)," Cervantes said.

Dr. Nancy Borja-Chio, his cardiovascular intensivist, said the First Gentleman had to stick to a regulated diet that is low in fat, salt, sugar and cholesterol.

"He can eat a lot of protein because we want the wound to heal fast," Chio said.

For his cardiac rehab in the hospital, he will have to take treadmill and other cardio exercises, according to his cardiologist Dr. Millie Luque.

Arroyo, not gov't, paid hospital bills, says exec

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

GOVERNMENT DID NOT FOOT THE bill for the hospitalization of the President's husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, according to a Malacañang official.

Arroyo settled his own bills for his 23-day stay at the St. Luke's Medical Center where he had open heart surgery, according to Undersecretary Juris Soliman.

"The bills were paid. It's not for free," said Soliman, the First Gentleman's chief of staff.

"It's not government money, it's private money," Soliman said yesterday, after her boss was discharged from the hospital.

Soliman and SLMC officials declined to give the actual cost of Arroyo's hospitalization but hospital sources said it could have amounted to between P2.8 million to P4 million.

The amount did not include the professional fees of each of the 18 doctors who composed Arroyo's multidisciplinary medical team.

Hospital sources said the doctors' fees could have run to millions but that the doctors did not charge their high-profile patient.

The hospitalization cost included Arroyo's stay in the intensive care unit, which cost around P100,000 a day.

He stayed in the Cardiovascular Recovery Room from April 10 to April 17 before he was transferred to a private room at the telemetry heart station. He spent 15 days at the telemetry unit which cost P3,000 a day.

Apart from this, the President stayed in one of the hospital's presidential suites which cost P21,000 a day. During her husband's stay in the hospital, the President held office in this 5th floor suite.

Dr. Rommel Cariño, the heart surgeon who performed the emergency aneurysmectomy and triple bypass on Arroyo told the INQUIRER about two weeks ago that he would not charge his patient for the two operations.

"I will not charge the First Gentleman because that's my way of giving courtesy to the President who is the highest official of our government. That's not hospital policy, that's my personal policy," said Cariño, who has performed around 1,200 heart operations.

Cariño [illegible]aining officer of the cardiovascu[illegible] thoracic training program of the state-run Philippine Heart Center and section chief of valvular surgery at the St. Luke's Heart Institute.

The First Gentleman's main attending physician was Dr. Juliet Gopez-Cervantes, a gastroenterologist and hepatologist who also heads St. Luke's liver center. The team also included Dr. Antonio Sibulo, director of the St. Luke's International Heart Institute; Dr. Jonnel Lim, head of the Department of Anesthesiology; Dr. Oscar Naidas, chair of the Department of Medicine; Dr. Manuel Mariano, director of the Institute for Neurosciences, and Dr. Joven Cuanang, medical director.

Air Force insists kite caused chopper crash

By Tarra Quismundo

THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) YESTERday maintained its initial findings that a kite's string may have caused the fatal crash of a Huey helicopter in Cebu on Saturday amid doubts from local officials.

While avoiding a word war with local officials questioning the cited probable cause of the crash, Air Force officials reiterated the flight risks that a seemingly harmless kite may pose to a rotor-reliant aircraft such a UH-1H.

Officials in Lapu-Lapu City, where the PAF Huey crashed killing nine persons, had expressed disbelief over initial probe results indicating that a kite's string that got entangled in the ill-fated chopper's rotor may have caused the incident.

"They are entitled to their own opinion... The point is, if there is no problem about flying kites near fly zones, why is there a regulation prohibiting flying kites within a certain distance away from an airport?," said Air Force commanding general, Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino.

Kite ban

Brig. Gen. Arthur Mancenido, commander of the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing based in Cebu, said the Air Transportation Office (ATO) has been enforcing a regulation prohibiting kite-flying within a 2.5-mile (roughly 4 kilometers) radius from an airport or a runway.

ATO's Manila Tower meanwhile said the agency has been enforcing a ban on activities that might affect aviation such as parachute drops, balloon releases, kite-flying and even the construction of tall buildings within a five-mile (around 8 km) diameter of the aerodrome, the area covering the airport.

"When a kite hits a Huey, its string becomes entangled in the rotor. And when that happens, it might slow down the turning of the swash plate, which controls the rotor," said Mancenido.

"It's not safe to hit a kite because the rotor might fail because of that," he said.

As a Huey pilot in the '80s, Mancenido had experienced first hand what chopper pilots call "kite strikes," an incident when a kite's string gets caught in either the chopper's tail or main rotor.

Nylon string

Citing PAF's preliminary findings on the incident, Mancenido said nylon strings were found stuck inside the crashed chopper's swash plate, a mechanism that enables the rotation of the helicopter's main rotor.

"The investigation is not yet finished. What we are only saying is the string may be a probable cause. We still have yet to inspect the engine," said Mancenido, adding that the Huey's engine has been brought to PAF's chopper depot in its Clark base for a thorough checkup.

The officials meanwhile assured the bereaved families of the victims that PAF would extend assistance for their interment.

"We will shoulder burial expenses, as we had said before. We are still talking about how to finance that, but we will do what we can," said Tolentino.

"We are taking care of all of them... We will take care of the hospital bills and the interments. We're looking for funds for it. We have to fulfill our moral responsibility," said Mancenido, who is among the officials tasked with extending financial assistance on the ground.

PAF's fleet of 41 Hueys will remain grounded until investigators have finished examining the crashed chopper's engine to look for possible irregularities that may have caused it to fail in its last flight.

The chopper was on its way back to Mactan's Ebuen Air Base around 5:50 p.m. on Saturday when it crashed onto two tricycles, killing seven passengers and two PAF crewmen. It was the first fatal military aircraft crash this year.

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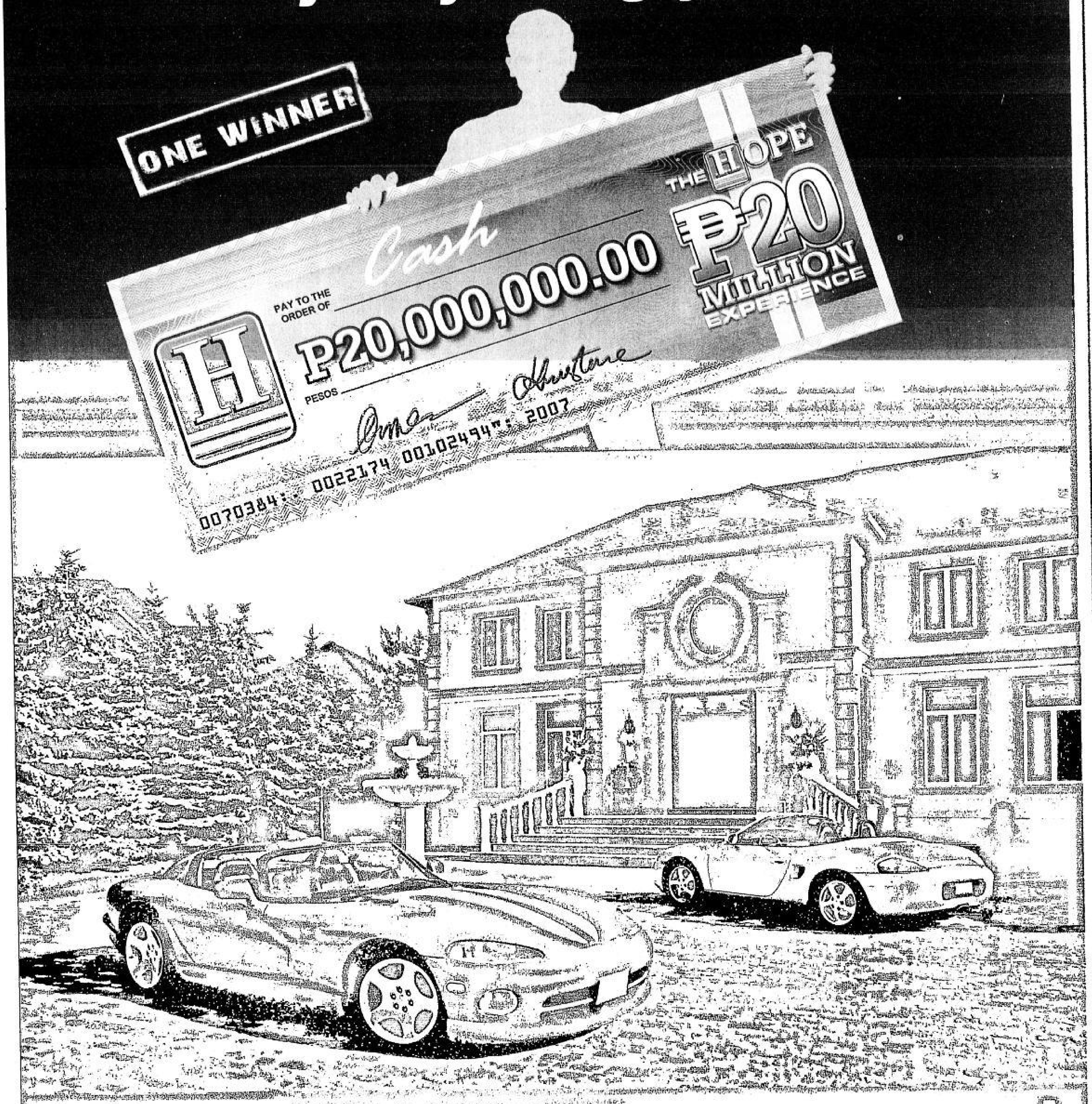
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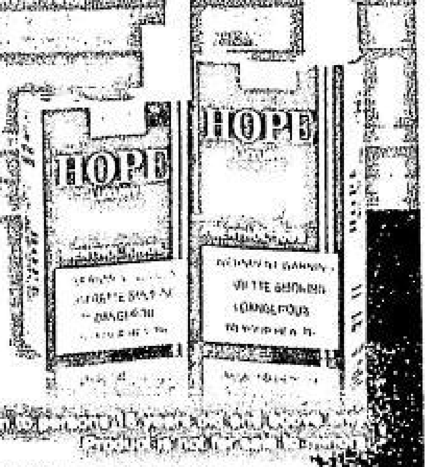

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Salonga sees Marcos in GMA, Ver in Esperon

From page A1

lent and most corrupt in modern Filipino history."

"But even more violent and more corrupt was the Feb. 7, 1986, election which culminated in the Edsa I People Power Revolution. We hope that this kind of an election—violent and fraudulent—does not happen again, for your sake and for the sake of our suffering people," he told the President.

Elsewhere, Dagupan-Lingayen Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Ms Arroyo was no longer in control.

"Frankly, the way the killings go on, from the extrajudicial killings and now the [election-related] killings, notwithstanding all the probes and the reports, the conclusion is that the Commander in Chief is no longer in command," Cruz told the INQUIRER by phone when asked to comment on the President's decision to call out the Armed Forces.

"I'm sorry to say that, but it's what I think," he said, adding that the President had been relegated to making "oral protestations" and ordering "ceremonial investigations."

"More than the national leadership telling the AFP and the Philippine National Police what to do, she simply accepts what they do," the outspoken archbishop said, referring to the alleged involvement of the military and police in the unabated killings of journalists and leftist activists.

Immediate steps

Ms Arroyo's father, the late former President Diosdado Macapagal, was a colleague of Salonga's in the old Liberal Party.

An old hand in Philippine politics and a victim of the Aug. 21, 1971, bombing of the LP *miting de avance* at Plaza Miranda, Salonga said experience and history have shown that Ms Arroyo's order increasing the numbers of checkpoints nationwide might prove futile in preventing further bloodshed.

He proposed "immediate steps" that he said would allow Malacañang to "regain the people's trust and confidence at this crucial hour."

Among these steps are the appointment of "a person of moral integrity, competence and impartiality" to the remaining vacant commissionership at the Commission on Elections and a stop to the deployment of military troops in impoverished areas in Metro Manila, he said.

Salonga said Ms Arroyo should also deal with the purported public distrust of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon who, he pointed out, had been "linked to the dishonest elections in southern Mindanao."

He said that while he held "no personal grudge" against Esperon, the latter was shown in surveys, "whether correct or not," to have the lowest rating among Ms Arroyo's allies and subordinates.

"We recall a similar figure during the last days of Marcos before Edsa I—Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver. As commander in chief of the AFP, there is a lot you can do to avert a similar upheaval. We respectfully urge you to do so as soon as possible," Salonga told Ms Arroyo.

No merit in deployment

Salonga said he, the trustees and officers of nonpartisan watchdog groups Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan did not see any merit in deploying soldiers to poor communities in Metro Manila a few weeks before the elections.

"Peace and order is the main responsibility of the national police. The role of the military is to protect and defend our people in case of foreign invasion. But why the lack of regard for this basic distinction, unless—as keen observers believe—your administration has a wrong, horrible agenda in mind?" he said.

In October 2006, the Comelec and the Department of Defense under then Secretary Avelino Cruz signed a memorandum of agreement aimed at insulating the military from partisan politics by limiting its role in the elections to augmenting security in places under serious armed threat.

Rare opportunity

Salonga said Ms Arroyo had "the rare opportunity to do something positive" by naming the proper person to the seventh slot in the Comelec.

"We respectfully and humbly urge you to do so even at this late hour, since it is certain many problems will confront the Comelec immediately before, during and long after" the May 14 elections, he said.

According to Salonga, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and "at least two of his commissioners are seriously tainted because of their track record and their palpable bias in your favor."

"In fairness to the others, Commissioners Romeo Brawner and Rene Sarmiento have earned public trust due to their meritorious performance. Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer's trust rating is still uncertain," Salonga said.

He added: "We believe we cannot keep quiet in the midst of the many problems that confront our people, as a result of massive poverty, endemic corruption and worsening violence and criminality."

Archbishop Cruz said that with the military given a prominent role by Ms Arroyo in the run-up to the elections, the media should now take on the role of watchdog.

"The administration, the AFP and the PNP are not comfortable with the media telling the real score, and the media should not allow itself to be muzzled, threatened and challenged," he said.

Esperon: AFP to set ...

From page A1

violence, Esperon told reporters at the headquarters of the 10th Infantry Division in Camp Panacan here.

He said special attention would be given to "problematic areas" like Sulu.

But he added that while the military was increasing its presence, the Philippine National Police remained the lead security agency for the polls.

He said Army vehicles stationed at checkpoints in the countryside would be clearly marked.

"We appeal for cooperation from the public," Esperon said.

The police have tightened their watch over at least six areas in Central Mindanao earlier identified as areas of concern.

Central Mindanao includes the provinces of North and South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Sarangani.

Chief Supt. Felizardo Serapio, chief of Police Regional Office 12, told reporters he would double the number of policemen assigned to Midsayap and Pikit towns in North Cotabato, Palimbang in Sultan Kudarat, Maitum in Sarangani, and Polomolok and T'boli in South Cotabato.

On Monday, Police Regional Office 12 distributed 11 patrol vehicles to various police stations and 100 9-mm pistols to new recruits.

Serapio said these would enhance police mobility and fire power in the region, especially during the elections. *Dennis Santos, Aquiles Zonio, Eldie Aguirre and Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

'We Forum' challenged Marcos-controlled press

IN THE KNOW

WHEN PRESIDENT FERDINAND Marcos declared martial law in 1972, he instructed his press and defense secretaries to take over the mass media, transforming what once was regarded as one of the freest presses in Asia into nothing more than a propaganda mouthpiece of his government.

Allowing only a few of his cronies to reopen newspapers and radio and television networks, Marcos made sure that only positive stories were published or broadcast.

Malacañang's press office—later transformed into the Department of Public Information—screened local news reports.

Dispatches of international news agencies and foreign correspondents were likewise subjected to censorship for a few weeks after the martial law declaration but this was soon lifted to please Marcos' patrons in Washington.

A Media Advisory Council was later established and issued guidelines on the use of stories that were not "conducive to an atmosphere of tranquility."

Like buying porno

The late journalist Jose Burgos Jr. launched the English-language weekly "We Forum" in May 1977, publishing news that the Marcos-controlled press did not. With a circulation of 20,000, We Forum was sold clandestinely.

"(It was) like buying pornography," Burgos recalled to the International Press Institute, which honored him in 2000 as one of the World Press Freedom Heroes. "The vendor would reach under the counter and fold it so small you could put it in your pocket."

We Forum was raided in December 1982 for its serialized report on Marcos' fake war medals that was prompted by an exposé in The New York Times. Burgos was arrested with nine of his staff and the newspaper was closed.

While an international outcry paved the way for Burgos' release, the trial dragged on and silenced We Forum, pushing Burgos to publish an English version of his Filipino weekly Malaya. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

Armed men seen taking Burgos' son in QC mall

From page A1

But Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, denied the AFP was involved and said it was "unfair" for militant groups to implicate the military in the incident without evidence and to issue statements "filled with malice."

"We have checked it and there are no reports that Jonas is under the custody of the AFP," Bacarro said.

Burgos' widow Edith said witnesses reported that they saw eight armed men accost her 36-year-old son on Saturday inside the Ever Gotesco mall on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, cover his face with a sack and beat him before dragging him into a maroon-colored van.

Edith said some of the men were "clean-shaven" and "appeared like members of the military."

Two others—a woman identified as Melissa Reyes and an unidentified man—were earlier reported to have disappeared with Jonas but the witnesses gave no account of the two and Edith had no further details about them.

Edith said the witnesses identified Jonas after his photograph was shown on television newscasts on Monday following her news conference. She said she was grateful that clues regarding her son's possible whereabouts had surfaced.

"But having heard that he may have possibly been abducted by these people scares me," Edith said.

Jonas is one of five children of Joe Burgos, the late publisher of We Forum and Malaya newspapers that challenged press restrictions during the martial law regime of Ferdinand Marcos. For his efforts, the International Press Institute named Joe Burgos one of the world's 50 Press Freedom Heroes of the Century.

Appeal to GMA: 'Do your job'

In an interview over dzBB radio yesterday, Edith was asked to react to President Macapagal-Arroyo's Labor Day message in 2006 for "destabilizers" to stop their campaign and allow her to do her job.

Edith said she was taking the President's word for it and asked Ms Arroyo to "please just do your job" as Commander in Chief and "send word to the field that whoever is holding Jonas should free him immediately."

She said she and other supporters were planning to go to different military camps to look for Jonas.

"Any other information regarding my son would be greatly appreciated," she said.

Edith said at Monday's press conference that she last heard from her son on Saturday when he replied to a relative's text message, saying he was on his way home from SM North Edsa. She explained that the family was meeting regarding the future of We Forum that night.

Is training a crime?

Jonas, an agriculture graduate of Benguet State University, had conducted an organic farming training earlier on Saturday in San Miguel, Bulacan, for the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan (AMB), a chapter of the militant peasant organization Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

AMB and KMP are both militant peasant organizations that advance agrarian issues and the struggle of farmers in Central Luzon. Some KMP members were among the more than 800 victims of extrajudicial executions since 2001 (the INQUIRER count is 301).

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, who authored a bill seeking a ban on enforced disappearances now pending in the Senate, expressed grave concern that the younger Burgos had become the latest "desaparecido" (disappeared).

"If the Armed Forces of the Philippines has a case against him, the AFP should go to court and not resort to extrajudicial measures," Ocampo said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

"But what is his crime? Is it now a crime to provide agrotraining to organized farmers?" Ocampo added.

Disappearances

As of March 2007, the Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND), an organization founded in 1985 by relatives, friends and colleagues of desaparecidos, had listed 188 cases of disappearances in the country since 2001.

Last year, 77 people were reported missing, an almost 200-percent jump from the 26 recorded in 2005.

Reelectionist Sen. Ralph Recto yesterday said the government should put in as much effort in looking for the missing son of Joe Burgos as it did in its search for US Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell who was found murdered last month.

"The country owes the Burgos family a great deal of gratitude for the freedom it enjoys today that it should repay their valor by finding a missing kin," said Recto.

"During dangerous times, his father did not disappear for teaching us about freedom so why should his son go missing for simply teaching some folks about farming in these supposedly normal times?" *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

More TV viewers preferred 'Isang Tanong' to beauty tilt

From page A1

for public affairs Nessa Valdellon told the INQUIRER on Monday.

(The INQUIRER is a media partner of GMA in the program.)

With its snappy editing and game-show setting geared toward the MTV generation, "Isang Tanong" left no room for long speeches and rambling discussions, Valdellon said.

It strictly adhered to the Commission on Elections' rule of equal time for candidates both in and out of the studio by posing to all of them four questions, each to be answered in 90 seconds max.

Antonio Trillanes of the Genuine Opposition (GO), behind bars for his involvement in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, answered the questions from his detention cell.

"It was educational, it was fast-paced, and it aired at a good prime-time hour. GMA top management gave us the prime-time slot we requested—on two Sundays in a row—because they agreed that choosing the next senators of the nation is crucial, that such a forum should not be relegated to the wee hours of the morning," Valdellon said in an apparent dig at ABS-CBN, whose own political debates aired way past bedtime on its free channel.

According to Valdellon, GMA decided to hold a forum, and not a debate, because "the number of [senatorial candidates], 36 as of our last count, simply made it impossible to mount a debate."

"We mounted the forum format with some creative touches—the soundproof booth, the pre-recorded VTRs, the ballot box questions coming from other candidates [which turned out to be a good way to find out how the candidates formulate questions and what their concerns are]," she said, adding:

"We did our best to make the show interesting and watchable, so that a larger part of the general public would sit through it and get to meet all the candidates."

The second part of the forum is scheduled to air on May 6.

On the spot

Some candidates were put on the spot by the pointed questions of a six-member panel of journalists.

Asked how he intended to recover his hefty spending on TV ads, Miguel Zubiri of Team Unity (TU) said he needed to let people know about him and his programs.

GO's Francis "Chiz" Escudero was asked about his silence on the supposed shortcomings of his patrons (ousted President Joseph Estrada and Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco), in contrast to his active participation in the attempts to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Chief Justice Hilario Davide.

In response, Escudero said he did not deal in personalities, just issues.

GO's Luis "Chavit" Singson was asked when he would expose the purported corruption of the Arroyo administration, the way he did in Estrada's case.

Singson said the crusade against anticorruption was the job of everyone, and blamed the lack of a law protecting whistleblowers for the reluctance of witnesses to come forward.

'Hello Garci'

Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, also of GO, said he would continue the investigation of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

Trillanes said the eradication of corruption required the President's removal from office. He also refused to apologize for being one of the leaders of the Oakwood mutiny, saying it stemmed from his responsibility as a soldier, a Filipino and a Christian.

GO's Anna Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng said she would encourage the use of contraceptives to curb population growth—a topic that most candidates avoid for fear of antagonizing the Catholic Church.

TU's Edgardo Angara, whose family dominates Aurora politics, said he saw nothing wrong with political dynasties so long as the family members elected were qualified and delivered on their promises.

GO's Sonia Roco was direct in her response to the question of why voters should vote for her—she would not be corrupt, she would not lie, and she was only one of 12 choices.

"*Pwede na po* (I'll pass muster)," said Roco, who claimed to represent "mothers, teachers, womanhood and all Filipinos."

Alan Peter Cayetano was the other GO candidate featured.

Less-known candidates

"Isang Tanong" also offered a rare chance for the less-known candidates—Dr. Martin Bautista and Adrian Sison of Ang Kapatiran, Felix Cantal of the Philippine Green Republican Party and Ruben Enciso of the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan—to be seen and heard by the TV-viewing public.

None of them, however, stood out in the program.

Press freedom slips in Asia

From page A1

tions. The fact that press freedom is in retreat is a deeply troubling sign that democracy itself will come under further assault in critical parts of the world."

The Washington-based Freedom House advocates spreading democracy. Its annual press freedom study rates countries as Free, Partly Free or Not Free.

Worst of the lot

The study called Burma (Myanmar), Cuba, Libya, North Korea and Turkmenistan the worst-rated countries for press freedom. In Libya, for example, any criticism of leader Moammar Gadhafi can bring a prison sentence.

But not even the United States, called "one of the better performers," escaped criticism for cases in which journalists faced legal pressure, including imprisonment, to reveal confidential sources.

Some of the more well-known incidents of 2006 included the murder of journalist Anna Politkovskaya in Russia, the nonrenewal of a license for a prominent opposition TV station in Venezuela, and the proposal for fines of up to $12,500 for journalists in China who report "sudden events" like protests and natural disasters without government permission.

Appalling cases

Russia and Venezuela were called "appalling" because of their impact on the regions around them. Of the 12 non-Baltic post-Soviet states, 10 were rated Not Free, the study said.

"We are also disturbed by the level of press freedom decline in what we had assumed were established democracies," said Karin Karlekar, managing editor of the press freedom survey.

The study said press freedom simply stagnated in areas of Latin America and specially in the Middle East and North Africa region, where 84 percent of the countries surveyed were rated Not Free.

18 percent have free press

One troubling region remained the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Israel's army and security services continued to commit a range of press abuses in 2006," the study said. "Journalists were subject to gunfire, physical abuse, arrest and substantial limits on their freedom of movement."

Of the 195 countries and territories in the 2006 study, 74 (38 percent) were called Free, while 58 (30 percent) were Partly Free and 63 (32 percent) were Not Free.

The study said 18 percent of people in the world lived in countries with a Free press, while 39 percent had a Partly Free press and 43 percent had a Not Free press.

The group also noted improvements in countries, including Italy, Nepal, Colombia and Haiti, due to greater overall political openness and an improved security environment.

The survey, which first appeared in 1980, gives countries a score out of 100 to reflect restrictions on their media. Iceland and Finland shared the top spot with nine points, while North Korea came in last with 97. *Reports from AP and AFP*

Lafayette invites Church leaders to Rapu Rapu mine

THE MINING FIRM Lafayette Phils. Inc. has invited church leaders to visit its Rapu Rapu project and asked them to keep an open mind and realize that the mine is a "positive factor" in their communities.

LPI chairman and president Carlos G. Dominguez extended the invitation in reply to last week's anti-mining pastoral letter read in the region's churches pushing for its closure.

"We are saddened that the pulpit was used for a personal and nonspiritual advocacy. We believe that bringing them over would clarify old issues long settled by scientific studies and help make them enlightened advocates," said in a press statement.

These advocates must be enlightened and open-minded because the present antimining position that in effect is asking the already poor to remain poor and ignorant—all because of the beliefs of a few who will not suffer the consequences of their advocacy in the first place—is not tenable in a democratic society, he said.

He also expressed disappointment that some Church leaders in Sorsogon and Albay were using their anti-Lafayette stance to pressure candidates to promise the project's closure should they win.

"Mining is a legitimate and moral endeavor that creates hundreds of jobs and promotes new businesses. It is the best answer to poverty especially in isolated areas where government service and even Church presence are lacking," he said.

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- EFFECTIVE OFFICE MANAGEMENT FOR SECRETARIES AND PERSONAL ASSISTANTS — May 14 - 25, 2007 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- ADVANCED SUPERVISORY TECHNIQUES — May 15 - 24, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- RECORDS AND FILE MANAGEMENT — May 15 - 24, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- ACCOUNTING FOR NON-ACCOUNTANTS — May 12 - June 9, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- CORPORATE PLANNING — May 12 - June 2, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- HUMAN RELATIONS — May 12, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
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- MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL CONTROL — May 12 - 26, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS IN BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY — May 19 - June 2, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE — May 19 - June 2, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT — May 13 - June 3, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDIES — May 13 - June 3, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- PERT/CPM — May 13 - 27, 2007 Sunday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- LAW FOR NON LAWYERS — May 13 - 27, 2007 Sunday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- HOW TO START, FINANCE AND MANAGE A BUSINESS — May 13 - June 3, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM — May 17, 2007 Thursday 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL — May 22, 2007 Tuesday 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- TIME AND PRIORITY MANAGEMENT — May 24, 2007 Thursday 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- CUSTOMER INTIMACY — May 14, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- TECHNIQUES IN HANDLING DISCIPLINARY ACTION & DISMISSAL — May 21, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- WRITING THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING — May 21, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
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- GRIEVANCE HANDLING — May 23, 2007 Wednesday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

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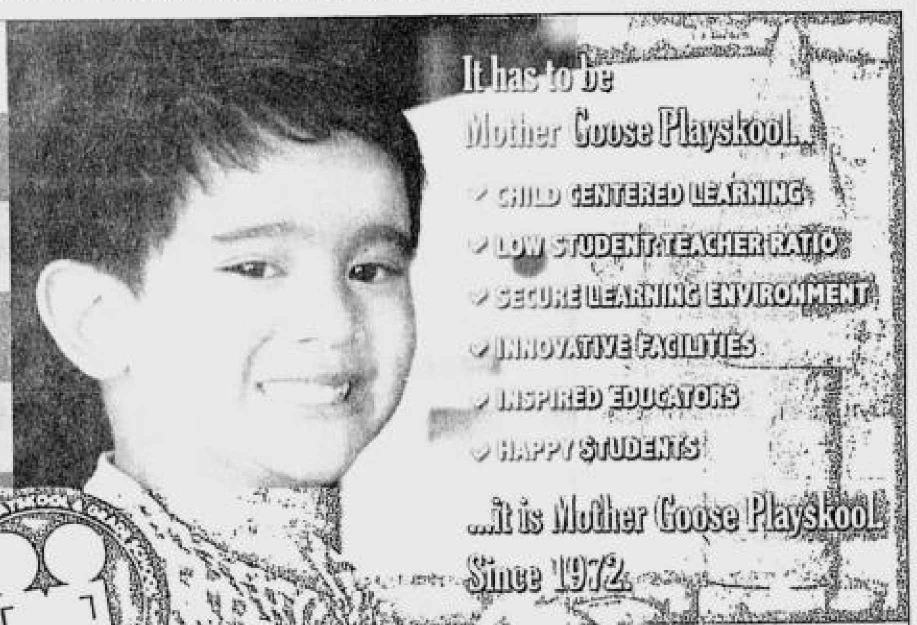

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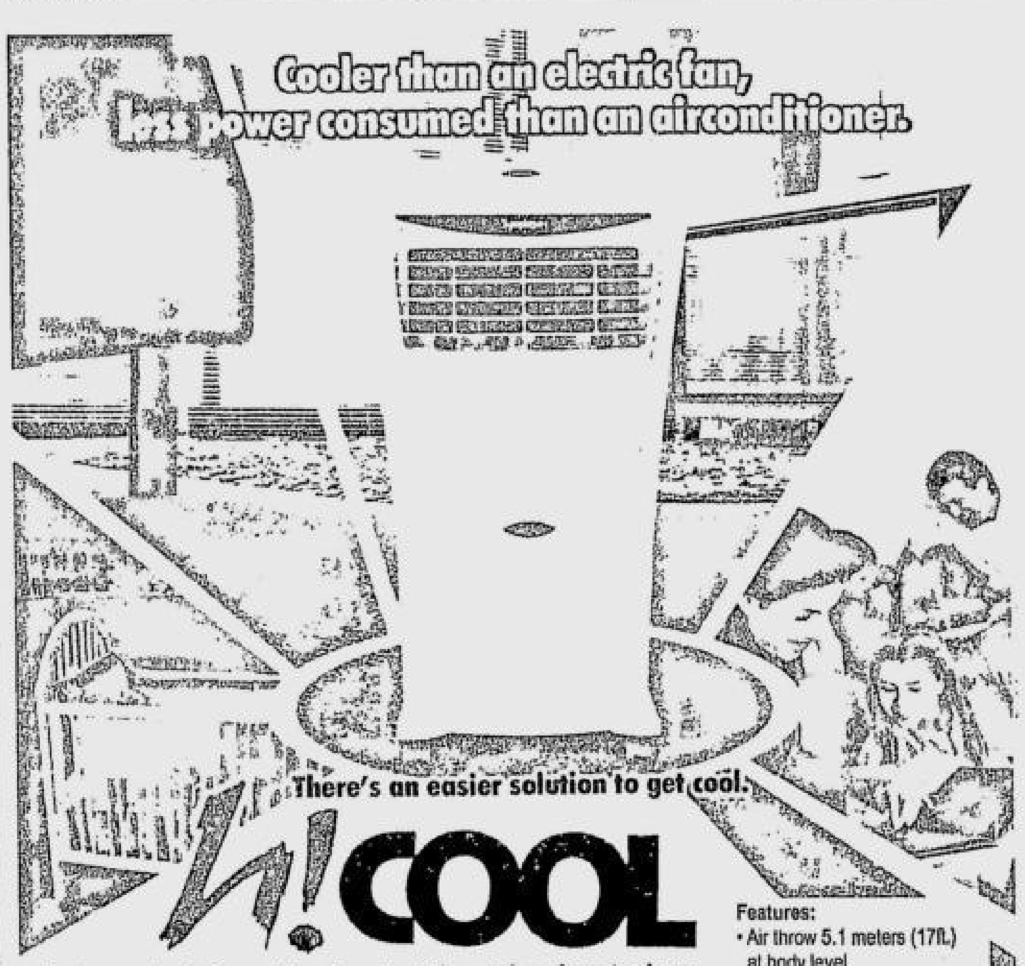

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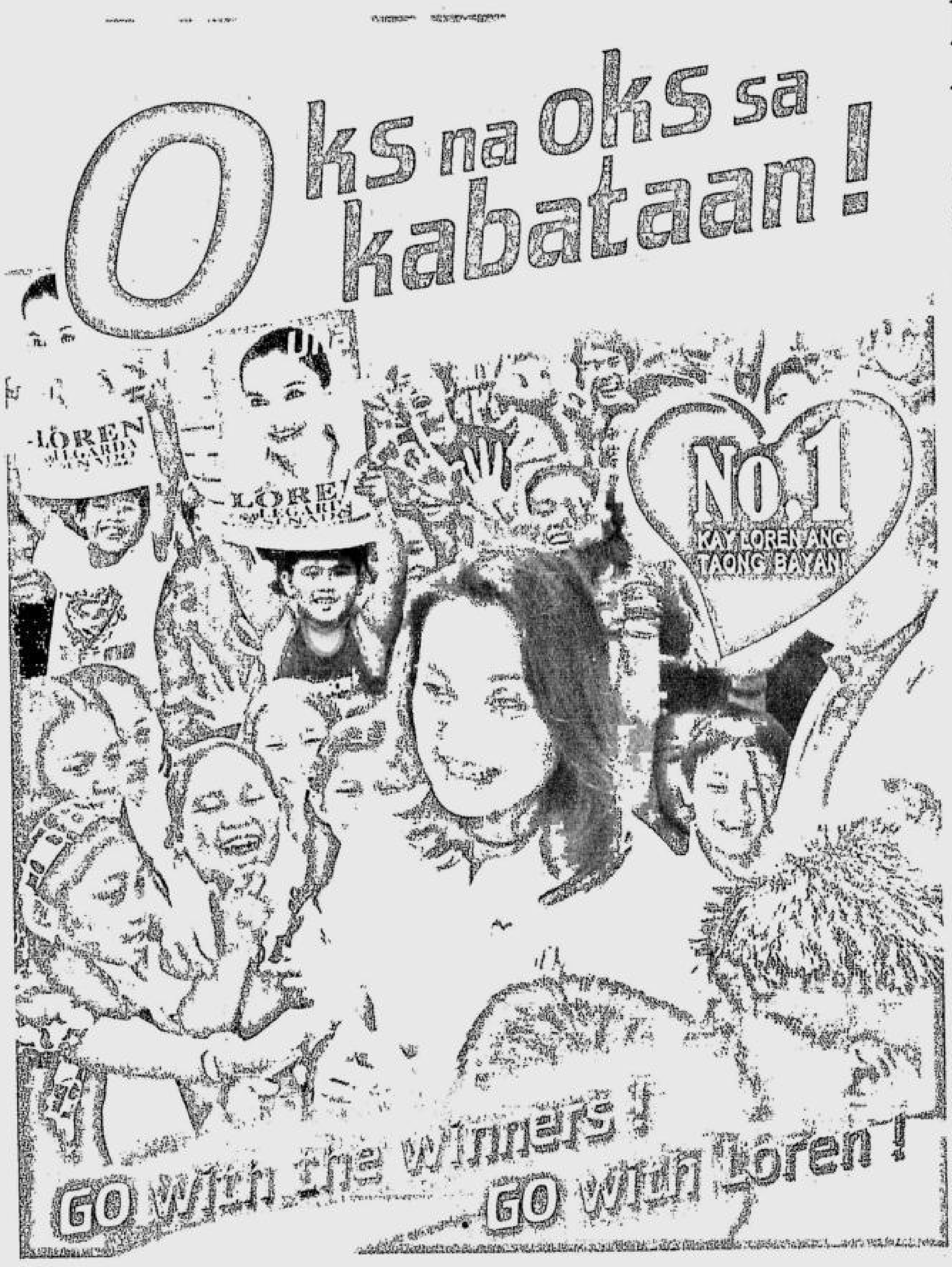
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Breast-feeding moms seek to break own world record

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

NOT ONLY IS BREAST-FEEDING BEST FOR babies, it is also good for a world record.

In an attempt to break its own achievement last year, the group, Children for Breast-feeding, has invited mothers to join a simultaneous breast-feeding program held today in at least 40,000 day-care centers all over the country.

One of the sites of today's breast-feeding programs is the BF Homes Clubhouse in the BF Homes Subdivision in Parañaque.

Promote

This is the second year the group and its partner, Nurturers of the Earth, are holding the event. Last year, the group made it to the Guinness Book of World Records after it managed to gather at least 3,541 mothers who simultaneously breast-fed their children in Manila.

It is not just about the world record. The group hopes to promote breast-feeding for children amid the proliferation of infant formula in the country, according to organizer Nona Castillo, Nurturers of the Earth director.

National prayer

"We want it to be a national prayer to protect our children from corporate greed," she told the INQUIRER.

The event is the group's answer to the aggressive media campaign of multinational companies manufacturing and promoting breast milk substitutes.

In an ad published in dailies weeks back, an association of milk companies listed the benefits of breast-feeding, but also said that "when a mother chooses not to, cannot continue, or stops breast-feeding, infant formulas prepared according to globally accepted standards and guidelines are deemed suitable and safe."

Castillo was quick to disagree, citing a study of the World Health Organization. In 2003, WHO estimated that 16,000 children under the age of 5 died in the Philippines as a result of improper feeding practices, including infant formula.

Educate mothers, children

"Our event is a prayer for those children who died as well as for those suffering because of [breast-milk substitutes]," she said.

Getting a boost from the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, the organizers hope the event will not only educate mothers, but children as well.

"We are holding it in day-care centers to show children that breast-feeding is the norm, so that they will think this is the natural way," Castillo said.

They also want to promote breast-feeding for children even beyond the age of 2, not only for health reasons, but also "so that children will remember."

"That will create a stronger bond between a mother and her child," Castillo said.

Holding the current record for the most number of mothers who breastfed simultaneously in a single site, the organizers hope to set a new record by gathering the most number of mothers in multiple sites.

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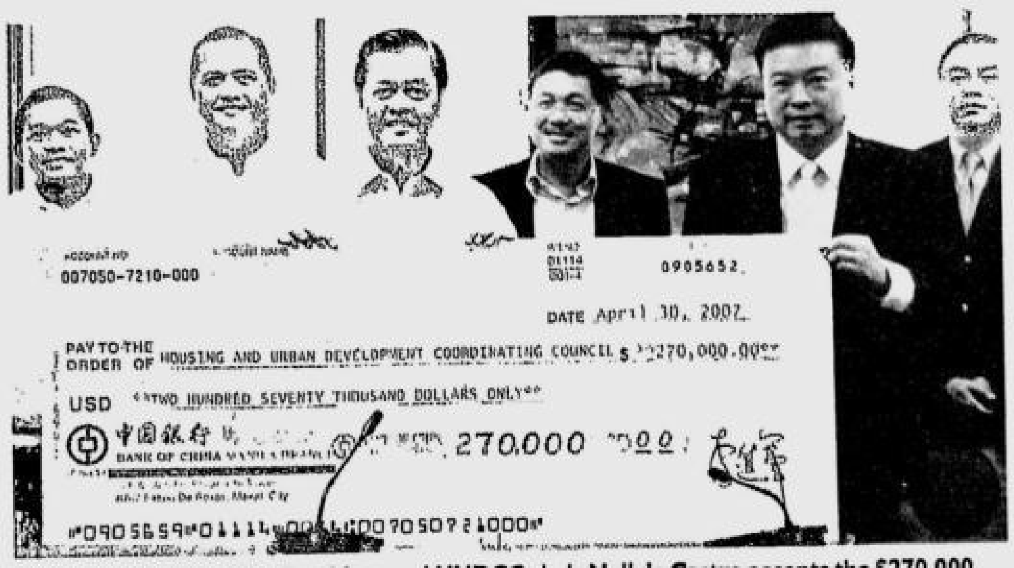
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HOUSING CHECK. Vice President and HUDCC chair Noli de Castro accepts the $270,000 check from Chinese officials Ambassador Li Jinjun (second from right) to the country to finance a feasibility study that will jumpstart the RP-China housing development program. Also in photo are (from left): Neda assistant director general Rolando Tungpalan, Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and Neda Director General Romulo Neri and Chinese Counselor Liang Wentao.

RP gets P13-M grant from China for housing

By Cynthia D. Balana

CHINA YESTERDAY EXTENDED AT LEAST P13 million assistance to the Philippines as initial funds to finance a feasibility study that will jumpstart the RP-China housing development program.

Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), accepted the assistance during the hand-over ceremony of the fund amounting to $270,000 at his office in Pasay City.

De Castro thanked the Chinese government officials represented by Ambassador Li Jinjun, Counselor Liang Wentao and Attaché Wu Di and Hua Ye.

"This is a significant event as it marks the start of a partnership between the two governments in the area of housing," De Castro said.

Earlier, the Philippine and Chinese governments held talks regarding the housing development program to be jointly launched by the two countries.

"We are heartened by the enthusiasm that the Chinese government has shown to help our government address the 3.7 million housing need in our country," the Vice President said.

He said the assistance shall be sourced from the Renminbi Yuan grant covered by the agreement on economic and technical cooperation between the two governments signed by the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) and the China's Ministry of Commerce on Jan. 15 this year.

Through the grant, De Castro said the government would be able to formulate a program that will identify viable housing projects as well as determine appropriate mechanisms for the program.

Receiving the assistance in behalf of the government was Undersecretary Lucille Ortille from HUDCC.

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OPINION

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Doubt

EDITORIAL

TOURISM SECRETARY ACE DURANO TAKES PAINS to point out that when asked by Pulse Asia about the "quality of elections" this year, 56 percent of respondents said elections would be clean and honest. Palace factotums have been bellyaching about the Social Weather Stations of late, while singing praises to Pulse Asia. Durano, for example, speaks glowingly of Pulse Asia while heaping scorn on the SWS for reporting that 40 percent of voters think President Macapagal-Arroyo "will cheat in the May 2007 elections for her candidates to win." That is black propaganda, he says.

And yet the SWS, in an April 12 press release, reported that 65 percent of respondents say the elections will be clean and orderly. That's an even bigger show of confidence than Pulse Asia has reported. So what gives? It can't be that either survey firm is reporting opinion findings widely different from its main rival. The SWS places trust in the Comelec at 46 percent; Pulse Asia places "big trust" in the Comelec at 40 percent. Given the margin of error of the surveys, these results aren't miles apart.

The reason behind the Palace dislike of the SWS is hard to fathom, since it usually centers on Mahar Mangahas and his blood relationship to the late Fernando Poe Jr. But then supporters of the late presidential contender harbor their own ill-feelings about Mangahas, too, which can only suggest that he is professional enough to risk the ire of partisan personalities.

We can only assume that the reason Malacañang is irritated is that the survey commissioned by Sen. Sergio Osmeña III contains questions and responses inconvenient to the administration party line. The survey in question took place from March 18 to 23, and it was meant to test the effectiveness of certain political messages. This is par for the course for political surveys. The SWS pointed out that it has conducted similar surveys and the Palace trumpeted the results. Specifically, its March 2006 survey commissioned by Pedro R. Laylo Jr. which found their way into an ad campaign titled "Let The Numbers Speak: It's Time To Move Forward" placed as advertisements by the Philippine Information Agency.

In that survey, which became the basis for a government-funded ad campaign, the questions asked included these: "The members of the opposition against PGMA should start helping to improve the country and stop too much politics"; "Whatever happened in the elections is over and it is time to move on and let the President focus on the real problems of the nation" and "PGMA has the right plan for the nation and the economy but it is not moving fast enough as expected by the average citizen."

The value of the survey is easy to demonstrate: these statements remain the cornerstone of the administration's messages to this day.

The survey, commissioned by the opposition and conducted by the same SWS and disclosed in the same manner as the one the Palace found useful enough to publish in ads funded by our tax pesos, contained statements ranging from the obviously self-serving: "The Senate is an important government institution that serves as the watchdog of excesses in the government"; to the tried and tested, "Whatever the economic gains this current administration is saying, personally I do not feel it"; to the objective (in the sense that the answers could go against opposition expectations) "I believe that the future of Filipinos will be brighter under the leadership of the current administration" to the, bluntly speaking, infuriating to the Palace, such as, "President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo steals from the coffers of the country" and "The husband of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, steals from the coffers of the country," not to mention "President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo often lies about things that she says to the public."

The fact of the matter is the ongoing campaign has seen both sides, administration and opposition, commission surveys. All of them subject to the same condition: that the findings will eventually find their way to the public. At which point, whichever side they're on, the politicians end up at their weakest, for who can contradict what the surveys say the public feels?

And so, if a significant portion of the public—around 40 percent—has negative expectations of the coming elections, what is the government going to do about it? Pretend the emperor still has clothes?

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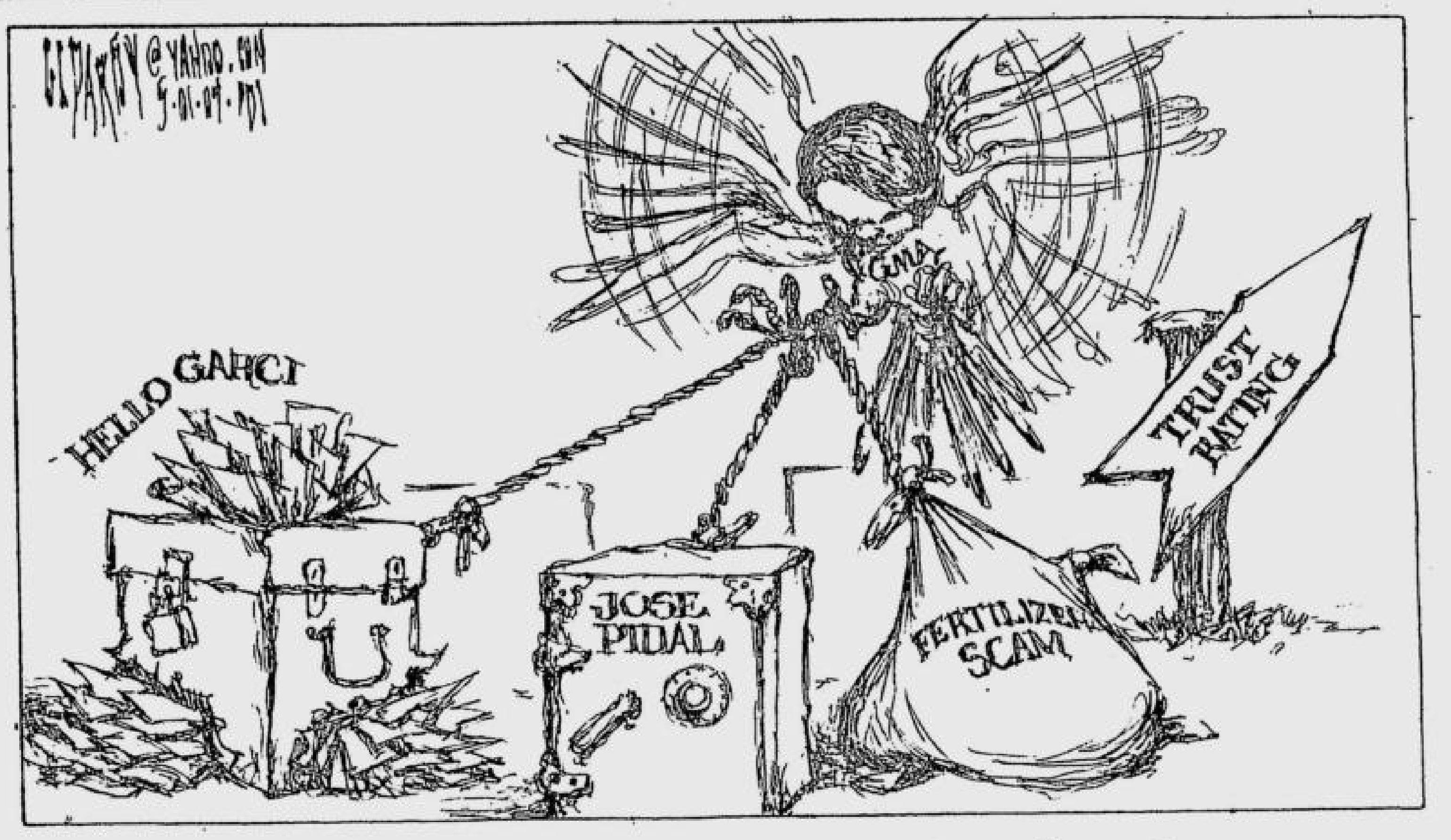


Polls may be over before Comelec decides cases

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

YESTERDAY BEING LABOR DAY, IT IS TIMELY to discuss the snail-paced progress of labor-management cases in the National Labor Relations Commission.

In any labor case, the worker is the underdog. While the case is pending, the employee has no job and income. In the first place, the worker goes to the NLRC because he has been unjustly dismissed. He has no lawyer while management has highly paid law firms working for it, with many lawyers and many tricks to delay a case. There are labor lawyers who represent aggrieved workers who get paid only after they win a case and collect the attorney's fees from the losing company. Sometimes some unscrupulous lawyers are bought by management to throw their client's case.

Management's usual technique is to delay a case for as long as possible to starve a complaining worker and his family so that he is forced to accept a compromise in which he gets practically nothing or to drop the case altogether. Some companies would rather pay large sums to bribe lawyers, arbiters and NLRC commissioners, and sometimes justices in the higher courts, rather than pay their employees what is due them out of *amor propio*. Pride makes them ashamed to accept that they lost a case against an employee. So they would bribe and do anything to get a favorable decision.

The poor worker has only the labor lawyer—whom he has no choice but to trust even if his counsel is already selling him down the river—on his side. And supposedly the NLRC.

The NLRC took the place of the Court of Industrial Relations to make the scales of justice a little more balanced for the worker. Because court cases almost always take a long time, which is advantageous to management but disadvantageous to the employee, the arbiter system was set up.

The arbiter is supposed to hold summary hearings and decide a case as quickly as possible. All arbiters, however, are overloaded with cases. Worse, some are corrupt. And even after an arbiter decides a case in favor of an employee, that is not the end of his calvary. It is in the NLRC itself where the case is delayed because there are commissioners, of all people, who are not immune to corruption.

When the NLRC finally decides a case, management runs to the Court of Appeals and, if it loses there, to the Supreme Court.

Here, the honorable justices, who have never experienced hunger, treat labor cases like criminal cases. It takes them years to decide each case, as if the worker and his family do not go hungry for every day that the case is delayed.

And when a case is remanded to the NLRC for enforcement of the decision, it takes the commission more long months to implement it. You know why? Guess.

NLRC commissioners behave as if they are appellate court justices who take their own sweet time and not labor court judges who are mandated by law to decide labor cases as quickly as possible so that workers will not unduly suffer because of delays. I personally know of at least two cases of illegal dismissals already decided and confirmed by the Supreme Court. The erring employers were ordered to pay the two aggrieved workers back wages and damages many years ago. The Supreme Court remanded the case to the NLRC for implementation about a year ago. But until now, the NLRC has not enforced the decision.

In one case, the employer has implied its desire to finish the case. Still, the NLRC seems to be sleeping on it. Are the commissioners waiting for something?

The NLRC is under the supervision of the Department of Labor and Employment. But the DOLE is more concerned with preventing increases in wages and labor strikes than helping workers victimized by unscrupulous employers. And labor unions are more concerned with wage increases of those still employed rather than the welfare of those already unemployed and still being victimized by employers, by a flawed justice system and, worst of all, by the very people whose job is to help them.

Will the labor secretary please do something about the NLRC?

* * *

Why is the Commission on Elections dragging its feet on the electioneering cases against Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Manny Pacquiao? All three were caught offering or promising cash and insurance policies to voters, acts prohibited by the Election Code. Punishment for candidates is disqualification. But the way the Comelec is hemming and hawing, the elections would be over before the culprits are disqualified.

There is no need for protracted investigations and hearings. Gonzalez has admitted offering P10,000 to each barangay captain in Iloilo who can give Team Unity senatorial candidates a 12-0 win. In his defense, Gonzalez said his act cannot be considered as vote-buying since the offer was made not to voters but to barangay captains, and that it was an "incentive" or a "prize." He likened it to an offer of a trip to Hong Kong for a job well done. He added that he was offering his own private money, not public money.

For a justice secretary, it is surprising that he does not know the law. Section 26 of the the Omnibus Election Code states: "Vote-buying and vote-selling—(1) any person who gives, offers, or promises money or anything of value ... or makes or offers to make an expenditure to be made to any person, (etc.) in order to induce anyone to vote for or against any candidate xxxx." A Comelec official explains that "the act of giving, the act of offering and the act of promising" are considered crimes. "That's why the mere act of promising money is already a crime."

Likewise, De Venecia's and Pacquiao's distribution of insurance policies to voters is vote-buying, pure and simple, and they should be disqualified.

Triumph of the spirit

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'VE HEARD MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH. I can't say I've heard a great many of his works, nor can I say that I can distinguish his playing from Yo-Yo Ma's or any of the cellists, great or small, who have brought sunlight into this world. But if, as John Donne says, the death of one man diminishes us all, then the death of such a man as this reduces us to rubble.

Rostropovich died last week at 80. The depth of loss of those who attended his funeral, which included Russian President Vladimir Putin, Spain's Queen Sofia and French First Lady Bernadette Chirac, and who struggled to put inexpressible sadness into words, testified to the world's impoverishment.

Rostropovich wasn't just a great musician, he was also a great humanist. Specifically, he was a great dissident. He was a student of Dmitri Shostakovich and Sergei Prokofiev, two giants of modern music, and he gave aid and comfort to them when they fell from grace with the Soviet authorities. He was a great friend as well of Alexander Solzhenitsyn and defended him when the poet became an object of vilification of the official Soviet press after he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1970. Rostropovich completely literally gave shelter to the enemy—in his dacha. For which pains, he himself became the enemy.

He left Russia in 1974, bidding a tearful farewell to his public in the Moscow conservatory stage. He and his family fled to Paris, and eventually settled in the United States. He would not come back until the dissolution of the Soviet Union a couple of decades later. His stature as a humanist—and musician—would forever be engraved in an image of him in 1989 playing Bach on his cello among the rubble as the Berlin Wall was being torn down.

Above all, there was his music. The best tributes didn't come from the dignitaries who came to see him off at Novodevichy Cemetery, home of Russia's most beloved. They came from ordinary folk. Nikita Valdovsky, a 22-year-old student of the balalaika, said when asked why she had traveled far to be at the funeral: "He was a great musician and a very good person. His music was education for the soul."

Rostropovich's life and death have lessons to impart for those who would heed them. The first is that truly there is no great distance between being a humanist and being an artist, between engaging life as you find it with the passion of a lover and surrendering yourself to your Muse with the desperation of a drowning man. Or in terms most of us should be able to appreciate, there is no great distance between political engagement and artistic dedication. The largeness of spirit you need for art is the same largeness of spirit you need to do what is right in the world you find yourself in.

There is no truth to the rumor that to become a great artist, you must ignore the challenges of your time and place or scoff at them as being beneath you. Politics is not inimical to art, nor art to politics. In her own wondrous and tragic way, Anne Frank proved that, her struggle to live life as best she could, quite apart from simply live, being just as luminous and transcendent as the diaries she wrote to document it. And in his own wondrous and heroic way, Rostropovich proved that, his defiance of tyranny and mediocrity was as much a dazzling sight to behold as his defiance of the earthly limitations of the cello was a dazzling sound to hear.

He was a very good person, someone who stuck by truth and decency as he knew them, whatever its consequences. He was also, in the estimation of his peers, the best cellist in the world after Casals.

Rostropovich's death has a lesson to impart as well. Or the way his country has embraced him back as a conquering hero does. That is that the most important persons in the world are not politicians and public figures, they are artists and intellectuals. They are the ones who deserve to be buried in earth reserved for heroes. They are the ones whose memories live on or are perpetuated. A country's greatness is not measured by the extent of its wealth, it is measured by the depth of its spirit. A country's importance is not measured by the strength of its sinews, it is measured by the power of its heart and mind.

I remember writing a column some time ago expressing admiration for the regal way other countries, France in particular, treated their artists and intellectuals. Their important boulevards and avenues are not named after politicians, they are named after writers, musicians, painters, scientists, inventors and philosophers. I can only admire as well what Russia has done for its lost son (its former leaders revoked Rostropovich's citizenship), its current best and brightest and their luminous guests being on hand to give him a magnificent sendoff.

We keep looking for examples on how this nation can be great again, or at all, I wonder why we don't see examples like this. We do have a National Artist Award, an honor that has been upgraded in protocol over time, but it is more titular than substantial. We bury more scoundrels in Libingan ng mga Bayani than we do artists. I don't know that we couldn't have done for Nick Joaquin what Russia did for Rostropovich. Nick Joaquin was a passionate humanist, too, one who refused to cooperate with the martial law regime despite its epic blandishments. And he was arguably the best writer of his—and probably our—generation.

I have yet to know of a country that became great that never learned to value its spiritual life. I don't mean religious life, I mean spiritual life. Though for us even being truly religious should do, as the truly religious share a common belief with the truly poetic, which is: Man does not live by bread alone.

Certainly not by the stolen variety.

Caught in a trap of his own making

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE MOMENT THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS started an investigation into whether Justice Raul Gonzalez broke the Omnibus Election Code when he promised to give P10,000 to each barangay captain in Iloilo City who could deliver 12-0 for Team Unity's senatorial candidates, it slammed the trap door, barring his escape from criminal prosecution for vote-buying.

No Philippine justice secretary in recent memory has been as stupid and as inept as Gonzalez in sealing himself inside a trap of his own making. Gonzalez has not denied he made the promise. He was caught in the act after he flagrantly displayed it in TV interviews and in his own radio program in Iloilo City. In fact, it was Gonzalez who disclosed the offer to the media. His interview was widely watched.

When the interview sparked a furor, Gonzalez made things worse for himself in subsequent press interviews when he rationalized his promise as an "incentive" or a "prize," and part of election strategy, saying "there is no election where you will not give incentives to your ward leaders."

Gonzalez's braggadocio did him in.

Gonzalez told reporters, "If they want to investigate me, it's OK. I'll defend myself. As far as I'm concerned, I haven't done anything wrong."

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, who is normally protective of the Arroyo administration, appeared far from impressed with Gonzalez's double-talk. Although Abalos was at first reluctant to confront Gonzalez with his promise, he could not help saying, "Anything equivalent to vote-buying is illegal. In vote-buying even a promise by itself is already illegal."

The Comelec appears serious. It can't but be serious. Abalos told the INQUIRER he ordered the investigation after reading newspaper reports about Gonzalez's offer. Abalos said: "Apparently he (Gonzalez) made an offer, and he was quoted in the newspaper. We no longer need a complaint to be filed before us." If Gonzalez did what was reported in the newspapers, "he might be liable."

Abalos' statement has provided the public a handle on something it can hold him accountable for.

When Abalos ordered the Comelec legal department to start an investigation on whether Gonzalez had broken the Omnibus Election Code, Gonzalez's position as the chief government legal officer became untenable and hard to maintain. Not only was Gonzalez put under a cloud that questioned his credibility to carry out the duty of the justice secretary to ensure the fair administration of justice. It also put into question the determination of the Comelec to conduct an impartial investigation of the highest judicial official of the executive department, without fear or favor, as a constitutionally independent office.

The Comelec is in a predicament. With the public announcement of the inquiry, it can no longer back off. The inquiry has left President Macapagal-Arroyo with few options to extricate herself and Gonzalez from the controversy that has continued to gain velocity as the May election approaches.

First, she sacks or suspends Gonzalez, or second, Gonzalez steps down. Either course is difficult. The first offers the President a dramatic opportunity to reestablish her badly damaged credibility and to regain public confidence in her ability to ensure a fair and free election and carry out a fair administration of justice. The second course is unlikely. If neither option takes place, the consequences for the administration could be more damaging.

Gonzalez's needlessly provocative pronouncements on a number of issues during the past three years, involving national security, human rights violation, military and police repression not only underscored the government's hard-line policy associated with its all-out war to crush the communist insurgency by 2010. They have called into question the capacity of Gonzalez to conduct an even-handed and fair administration of justice. Thy have also caused extreme embarrassment to the government.

The highly partisan conduct of Gonzalez in the promise to the barangay captains tends to reinforce public perception that the administration would cheat during the May election. This perception is reflected in a recent Social Weather Stations survey showing that 40 percent of people surveyed believed Ms Arroyo "will cheat" in the election.

The prospects of Gonzalez's stepping down are unlikely. The disclosure in the press of his offer to the barangay captains sparked calls from Walden Bello, Akbayan party-list candidate for Congress, for Gonzalez to go on leave. Gonzalez has knocked it back, saying he didn't take directions from "communists." Since then, Gonzalez has stonewalled in the face of snowballing calls for his resignation. But resignation is a word that is foreign to him. He has a thick hide.

The President has not rebuked Gonzalez. The silence is not due to her desire not to interfere with the Comelec's inquiry. It is seen as a sign of condonation.

The continued presence of Gonzalez in the Cabinet while the Comelec conducts the investigation affronts public opinion. It highlights the degraded ethical culture of the government, the tone of which is set by the President.

Gonzalez reflects that culture in its most obnoxious and repulsive manifestation. When he made the offer to the barangay captains, he incarnated the culture of impunity that defines the rejection of the government of the responsibility to end extrajudicial killings. Gonzalez flaunted this culture in his explanations which emphasized his impunity to act above the law.

No less than his dismissal can restore the integrity and credibility of the rule of law in this country.

A world-class complex for Cebu

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AS WE WERE LEAVING THE CEBU INTERNATIONAL Convention Center at the reclamation site in Mandaue, we were met by a crowd of ordinary folk, each one bearing a flower arrangement. They were headed for the plenary hall where the General Assembly of CFI, a network of community-based microfinance cooperatives, was going to be held the next day. In fact, banners were already up at the balcony, welcoming participants and the keynote speaker, actor and Team Unity senatorial candidate Cesar Montano.

It was only to be expected that preparations would be underway the day before a big event. But what set these preparations apart was that so many people seemed to be involved, bringing up flower arrangements in a never-ending relay and setting up reception tables and directional signs.

At the same time, I noticed that many of them were looking around in awe, admiring the vast CICC lobby and the huge plenary hall. Perhaps this was only a validation of the assertion made by Elizabeth Francia, chief of staff of Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia, who sits on the CICC management board. "The people have embraced this complex as their own," she said. "This is the first such center built in the Visayas and I think it is about time that a world-class convention center was built to host events in Visayas and Mindanao."

"(Cebuanos) are my zen," quips Marissa Nallana, a Manila-based events management specialist who has been a consultant on marketing and planning for the CICC since its inception. "Used as I am to pressure and stress in my line of work, I find that Cebuanos very rarely get stressed, approaching every problem with calm and dignity."

* * *

AT THE moment, calm and dignity aren't exactly on the minds of the governor's political opponents, who are making an issue of the CICC, which was built late last year for the Asean Summit, as a symbol of "bad governance."

As Garcia tells it, the complex had originally been planned as a "superdome" to be used mainly for sports activities. When the Philippines was asked to host the next summit ahead of schedule, President Macapagal-Arroyo asked the governor if Cebu was ready to host an important regional gathering which would draw the attention of the world. Crucial to the hosting of such a large meeting was a convention center and this was when the governor thought of using the site for the "superdome" for the CICC.

"It was entirely a project of the provincial government," admits the governor. "I decided on this so we could have complete control of the building schedule since we had very little time."

So when the project architect told her that the Department of Public Works and Highways had a budget for street lights in the complex, Garcia said she would refuse the money. "What if the building is finished and they're still putting up the lights?" she asked the architect.

This was a fortunate decision, as it turns out, since the "overpriced" street lights in the streets of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-lapu are now stoking controversy in the heated air of the elections.

Francia and Nallana point to a year's worth of bookings, local, regional and international, at the CICC. Nallana wishes the national government will pay more attention to what she calls "MICE" (for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions), which could only complement present initiatives to boost tourist arrivals. Certainly, for booming Cebu, a structure like CICC can only draw more foreign visitors for business as well as for pleasure.

* * *

MORE than 40,000 daycare centers, hospitals and privately sponsored sites will be the venues for a nationwide simultaneous breastfeeding today, dubbed "Sabay-sabay, Sumuso sa Nanay Year 2 (All Together Now, Breastfeed from Mother Year 2)."

"Sabay-sabay" came into being when a breastfeeding mother was asked by a security guard in a shopping mall to breastfeed her child in the rest room to "avoid embarrassment." Outraged, an international board certified lactation consultant (IBCLC) Dr. Elvira L. Henares-Esguerra, director of Children for Breastfeeding, then had a layout of the Virgin Mary breastfeeding Jesus, approved by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, and launched the first "Sabay-sabay Sumuso" in 2006 that had mothers unashamedly breastfeeding en masse on the front pages.

Last year, the City of Manila, in partnership with the Children for Breastfeeding and Nurturers of the Earth, garnered the Guinness World Record on Simultaneous Breastfeeding in a Single Site when they mobilized 3,541 mothers in the San Andres Sports and Civic Center in Malate. They broke the previous record of 1,130 breastfeeding mothers established in Berkeley, California, in 2002.

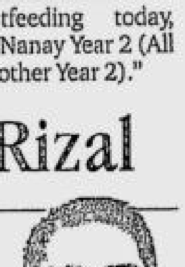
This year, the same organizers, in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda), will establish the first Guinness World Record on Simultaneous Breastfeeding in Multiple Sites.

To promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a child's life and continued breastfeeding beyond two years, prizes for the oldest breastfeeding children will be given away. Lucky participants who will be chosen through a computer-generated raffle will be awarded cash prizes from the President's social fund and some businesses supportive of breastfeeding.

Mothers and children will be fed with sweet potatoes, corn, *saba* and other local or indigenous foods to increase awareness and appreciation of these nutrient-dense foods to feed older infants and young children, instead of "follow-up formula milk."

Organizers observe the international standard of ethics that discourage the sponsorship of milk companies and companies that produce bottles, teats and pacifiers in any breastfeeding promotional activity.

Teaching Rizal



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHILE MOST TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ARE on vacation and preoccupied with finding ways to spend the time and get around the summer heat, I have been teaching two large classes on Philippine history. So far, we have been coping with the daily grind and the course work. The students have endured field trips to Intramuros and museums, and they even pretend to find my stale jokes funny.

In my introduction to the course, I realized that it has been half a century since Claro M. Recto and Jose P. Laurel sponsored and fought for the passage of RA 1425, better known as the Rizal Law. This is the law that made the study of the life, works and writings of Jose Rizal compulsory in all schools in the Philippines.

In the past half-century, other compulsory courses have been revisited, reviewed and, as in the case of Spanish, dropped or made an elective or course of the student's choice. In the collegiate level, therefore, only the following courses remain required and compulsory by law: Land Reform and Taxation, National Service (formerly the ROTC), and the Rizal course.

It is amazing that I have been teaching this course for two decades and have only read the law, hurriedly, once or twice. The last time the government took notice was in 1994 when then President Fidel V. Ramos ordered the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) "to immediately and fully implement the letter, intent and spirit of Republic Act No. 1425 and to impose, should it be necessary, appropriate disciplinary action against the governing body and/or head of any public or private school, college or university found not complying with said law."

Memorandum Order 247 was issued by Ramos following reports that some schools were not complying with the law mandating the teaching of the life and works of Rizal. It was even rumored that some schools did not teach Rizal or his works, so it was deemed appropriate that the teaching of Rizal be renewed and strengthened in preparation for the centennial of his death in 1996 and, of course, the centennial of the Declaration of Philippine Independence in 1998.

In order to appreciate the importance of RA 1425, we must remember that it originally had two versions, one from Congress, the other from the Senate and thus, one has to go through the thick volumes of the Congressional Record and the Record of the Senate for the transcriptions of the heated debates that went into the crafting of the law as we have it today. There is also a lot of materials related to the law in the newspapers of the period that record the opposition of the Catholic Church to the bill, which equals its current opposition to artificial methods of birth control.

Going through the preamble of RA 1425 we see the reason for such legislation:

"Whereas, today, more than other period of our history, there is a need for a re-dedication to the ideals of freedom and nationalism for which our heroes lived and died.

"Whereas, it is meet that in honoring them, particularly the national hero and patriot, Jose Rizal, we remember with special fondness and devotion their lives and works that have shaped the national character."

Nobody will argue over nationalism, although in a discipline such as history that is both informative and formative, the issue of nationalism requires a second look. When Teodoro Agoncillo declared, in the 1960s, that "there is no Philippine history before 1872," he changed the way a whole generation looked at history. He argued that primary sources before that turning point, the execution of Gomburza, was written largely by Spaniards, for Spaniards. Thus, what we had before 1872 was not Philippine history but the history of Spain in the Philippines.

Following Agoncillo's rewriting of Philippine history from a Filipino viewpoint came the classic nationalist works of Renato Constantino that also captured the imagination of the generation of the First Quarter Storm.

RA 1425 was meant to honor Rizal and other heroes. As a matter of fact, Ramos in preparation for the Philippine Centennial called for a consultative meeting of historians in order to draft a law that would officially declare National Heroes. Contrary to popular belief, there is no law making Rizal our national hero. He is such by tradition and acclamation. At best, Rizal was made "official" when the Department of Education in the 1950s made a list of distinct icons of national nature: the national tree is narra, the national flower is sampaguita, the national animal is the carabao, the national hero is Jose Rizal, etc.

Perhaps as a reaction to all this, Constantino wrote the landmark 1968 essay "Veneration without Understanding" which he delivered as the second in the Annual Jose Rizal memorial lectures. In this essay, Constantino suggested, among other things, that Rizal was an American-sponsored hero. It is this essay that always crops up whenever people debate on who should be the "national" hero, Rizal or Andres Bonifacio: This is not a historiographical issue but an ideological or political trap, that leads to debate without end. *(Conclusion on Friday)*

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Ganda'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE OTHER WEEK, I AGREED TO AN ELECTRONIC INTERview (i.e., by e-mail) with Ruel de Vera about Filipino concepts of beauty, parts of which he used for an article, titled "Beauty Slip," in last week's Sunday Inquirer. Reading through the article got me thinking more about "*ganda*" as a Filipino keyword, a keyword being a term that's used often in conversations and which carries many meanings that apply to different aspects of our lives.

At first blush, *ganda* deals with aesthetics, with what's beautiful. Like the English "beautiful," *ganda* is used to describe nature (including flora and fauna), cultural objects such as paintings and sculpture, jewelry, clothing and of course human beings.

As with "beautiful," *ganda's* aesthetic meaning tends to be associated with the female. We do not describe a handsome man as "*maganda*," although curiously, Sofronio Calderon's Diccionario Ingles-Español-Tagalog, published in 1915, translates "handsome" as "*maganda, mainam, marikit*," exactly the same terms for "beautiful." Today, we reserve *maganda* for a woman, but vestiges of the past are still with us in the way we describe both women and men as having "*magandang mukha*," which I'll tentatively translate as a "nice face."

Good face, good day

There are important differences in the ways "*ganda*" and "*magandang mukha*" are used. "*Ganda!*" tends to be a spur-of-the-moment evaluation of women, often drawing from clear social norms such as the color and smoothness of the skin, a certain height, body conformation, even the way the person carries herself. Having "*magandang mukha*," on the other hand, evaluates the way different characteristics in the person converge to leave an impact on the person. There can still be an aesthetic component, but the emphasis is not so much on outstanding characteristics than in the way the features blend together harmoniously, interacting with the person's demeanor and personality.

Ultimately, the face is evaluated as being good. Something's lost in the translation "good face," but really that's what "*magandang mukha*" is. We apply the adjective to a face that makes us feel, well, good because we feel the person, too, radiates niceness and goodness. It's the adjective a parent will apply, approvingly, to someone courting his or her child.

Last week I wrote, too, about how the most homely *askal* (street dog) can be *ganda*, too. "*Ganda*" here is not the opposite of "*pangit*" (ugly) but of "*masama*" or bad, "*masamang mukha*" being a face that causes disease, warning you of malice and ill will.

I've sometimes been asked why we greet people with "*magandang araw*," because it seems to translate, awkwardly, into "beautiful day." But "*maganda*" actually conveys wishes for a good day, as the Cebuanos do with "*maayo*" (or, sometimes simply "*ayo*"). *Maganda* then isn't beautiful in a literal meteorological way; a rainy day can still be a very good day, depending on the company we have, on how the day's events unfold. Our day is made good by the laughter of children in the morning, by that phone call, or e-mail, from overseas. Eventually, when a good day does seem certain, we begin to radiate it in our faces: yes, *maganda ang mukha*.

Ganda, limited to facial aesthetics, is superficial and fleeting, as we all too often find in our celebrities, including our politicians. The cosmetics, the cosmetic surgery, succeed in projecting some semblance of *ganda*, but only for the moment. The veneer wears off easily when the person doesn't have the inner spirit that projects *maganda*. It's not surprising that "*maganda*," used to describe *loob* (our inner self), takes on many different meanings. Returning to Calderon's 1915 dictionary, we find "*magandang-loob*" appearing all throughout the dictionary, to mean everything from amiable to charitable to good-natured. All said, it again boils down to goodness, but one that can be seen, felt and, most importantly, shared.

Singing out 'ganda'

Perhaps because it is so richly emotive, "*ganda*" takes on musical qualities, a word that is literally sung out. It can be a quick "*ganda*" that we mutter to ourselves after a job well done: a meal, a painting, even a column (followed by shame when I realize my immodesty). Other times, our voices are pitched as we sing out a delighted "*ganda*," often replicated "*ganda ganda*" when we get an unexpected treat, an object, an act, or, we turn a bend on a road, a hidden landscape. The *ganda* here often leads to a kiss, an embrace, sometimes even tears, when we are moved by the person giving the treat, as we are moved by the giver's *magandang loob*.

There's "*ganda*," too, the "*da*" stretched out with awe and respect for enduring beauty, as in Ricky Reyes' billboards featuring Gloria Romero: Ang Ganda ni Lola. We do that all the time for our own Lolas and Nanays and daughters and nieces and friends.

Beware though, a stretched "*ganda*" can drip as well with sarcasm. The "*da*" is stretched, but we sing it out in a deadpan tone to convey the feeling that the person only thinks she's *ganda*, but has no right to feel that way. The judgment is passed not so much on aesthetic grounds because the person may be physically attractive but is perceived to be undeserving of "*ganda*" because of reckless audacity, because of trying too hard with the cosmetics, with the clothing and jewelry, with the Botox. (For those who are not quite updated, Botox is a medical treatment that uses small amounts of bacterial toxins to paralyze the muscles. The effect? No wrinkles, and a peculiar frozen smile that elicits the Botox *ganda*.)

That Botox *ganda* indicts insincerity, but at times it can also be a reprimand, for a botched or mediocre job, often with an order to have it repeated. The Botox *ganda* is gendered, not quite in the domain of macho men, who express their displeasure by a volley of curses and expletives. The *ganda*-as-rebuke is an art mastered by the more flamboyant of gay males, and of middle-aged women (a.k.a. *matronas*), a concession to the norm of diplomacy without compromising on repugnance. I will never forget the way a gay "matronic" friend once got a restaurant bill that was completely in error. He looked at the bill, slowly lifted his eyes toward the waiter, crumpled the bill with one hand and went: "*Ganda. Ulitin mo.*" The correct bill was delivered within minutes.

It's curious Imelda Marcos constantly speaks of the true, the good and the beautiful, but rarely uses the Tagalog "*ganda*." It is a more powerful word in its connotations of the true and the good, and more.

Exercise your judgment of *ganda* this election time. Look closely at the candidates and ask yourselves if they have *magandang mukha*. The best spin doctors and speech writers can't quite deliver a *magandang mukha* overnight. *Magandang mukha* comes from the inner spirit, *magandang loob*, one which is cultivated through the years, through a good (in the sense of ethical) life. It is also through living that good life that one learns to detect *maganda*, not just in people's faces but in all who surround us, in all of nature.

Employed also going hungry

WHAT A COINCIDENCE. WHILE Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was speaking at the Philippine Military Academy about social amelioration and economic stability, the Social Weather Stations came out with survey findings that revealed the truth behind her spin. It was so callous for GMA to advise the hungry to prioritize basic needs over luxuries when the staple food of the ordinary Filipino is no longer rice and *galunggong* but noodles.

The record-breaking hunger rate exposed the myth of GMA's "social payback" after the country's "economic growth." Whatever economic gain there has been, the fact is, this has benefited only those at the top and has yet to trickle down to the masses. This is the true story of the ordinary Filipino.

That the increase in moderate hunger is greater than that of severe hunger is no cause for joy. It means that not only the unemployed but even those with jobs are experiencing hunger. Which is not hard to believe since the minimum wage of P350 in Metro Manila is less than half of the P768 cost of living for a family of five, this according to the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

The root of the worsening hunger lies in the anti-poor policies of the Arroyo administration, specifically the cheap labor policy and regressive taxation. Worsening hunger is the bitter fruit the workers must suffer after the sabotage of the P125 wage hike and the railroading of the RVAT in Congress. Instead of arresting Satur Ocampo, the military should jail the lawmakers who sat on the wage hike bill and pushed for the RVAT. Not only that, they should be hanged, together with the capitalists, for the crime of fomenting hunger.

The Partido ng Manggagawa will campaign in and outside the next Congress for a set of solutions to the problem of hunger. Among these are the legislated wage hike and tax exemption for workers earning below the cost of living; the regulation of "contractualization" so that workers will have regular jobs that pay decent wages and benefits; and the realignment of debt servicing to social services.

—PAUL BANGAY,
Partido ng Manggagawa,
5 Matiyaga St.,
Barangay Central, QC

Why a free press is anathema to GMA and husband

THE STRONG ARM OF THE LAW is being manipulated by persons who think they are above the law and can bend it anytime as they please. The arrest of the "Inquirer 8" and the harassment of media practitioners in our country further show that the powers-that-be in this benighted land will stop at nothing to hide their evil deeds and to silence critics.

The Philippines is supposed to be a democratic country but its present rulers and their families treat it as their private fiefdom, with the military and the police as their private armies. The nation is sliding back to dictatorship, similar to the one we had in the time of Ferdinand Marcos and in the African nation of Zimbabwe under its authoritarian ruler Robert Mugabe.

The INQUIRER, a spearhead in the fight against corrupt and incompetent governments, is not a stranger to harassment by those in power. The country's largest newspaper in terms of readership and circulation survived the fury of President Joseph Estrada whose ineptness, unpresidential behavior and corrupt leadership the newspaper reported on, just as it is now reporting on Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's bad governance and on the allegations of fraud in the 2004 presidential elections, among others.

Those in power may be able to silence one or two journalists some of the time but they cannot silence all journalists all of the time. Was it not dictator Napoleon Bonaparte who said that he would rather fight a thousand armies than a newspaper? It appears that some people do not learn.

In the near future, today's rulers will find themselves no longer in power, as the law so ordains. And they will no longer have the might they now wield in so abusive manner. Unless, of course, they do something drastic to extend, indefinitely, their questionable hold on power. If that happens, history will repeat itself and the country will yet again plunge into another dark era of tyranny, shame and infamy.

The country has now the unenviable distinction of being the most corrupt nation in Asia, according to a survey conducted by the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC). Prior to this finding, the Arroyo administration was held accountable by the UN rapporteur on human rights for the extrajudicial killings of political activists and journalists. She is now being asked by the US government, Canada, European Union and others to do something more concrete to stop the killings.

Given her administration's record, this may be the reason a free press is anathema to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband.

—RAMON MAYUGA,
GeRMayuga@aol.com

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LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Failed unions not an issue

IN HIS LETTER "SHALL WE IGnore marital history of candidates" (Inquirer, 4/11/07), Efren C. Carag all but crucified senatorial candidates whose only fault—if you could even call it that—is that they availed of their legal and moral rights to get out of failed marriages.

In his haste to condemn those who have had their marriages annulled, Carag conveniently failed to state that the Catholic Church itself annuls marriages for valid reasons. Therefore, his argument that those who have had their marriages annulled are living in sin does not wash.

Likewise, Carag should be reminded that while the lives of candidates are open to public scrutiny, no one among us is perfect. Jesus Christ himself warned us not to be judgmental of our fellowmen when He said: "He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone."

Candidates seek public office under the laws of men. By these laws they are judged and punished if they do something illegal in the performance of their sworn duties. It's not like that the candidates, for which Carag has so much contempt, are running for the papal office.

Puritanical standards—reminiscent of the Inquisition—are passé in this day and age when the Church preaches compassion and recognizes the frailty of men, as well as their potential to rise above their faults and past errors.

The sad fact is that marriages do fail, but there's no point in keeping together married couples who live miserable lives together. Carag should argue with the thousands of physically battered and psychologically abused women whom he wants to suffer in silence by keeping them trapped in marriages made in hell.

—MAE LLAMERA,
2753 Gen. Cailles St.,
Bangkal, Makati City

The reverend is not the Church

ACHILLES CORTEZ IS ENTITLED to his opinion ("Priest's joining politics very questionable," INQUIRER, 4/21/07), though it is quite obvious that he does not know anything about the current situation in Pampanga, about Fr. Ed Panlilio and his political rivals. It is also obvious that Cortez is not in Pampanga and neither is he a Kapampangan.

Almost every Kapampangan is familiar with the work of "Among Ed" among the victims of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. Most Kapampangans know, without an iota of doubt, who the country's biggest *jueteng* lord is and who benefited most from the quarrying industry in our province.

And obviously, Cortez does not understand the Church-State separation principle. We are no longer under Spanish colonial rule, which allowed priests to hold political and administrative powers. It seems Cortez has forgotten that a priest is not the Catholic Church, while he still believes in the myth that there is a Catholic bloc that dictates election results and government policies.

Cortez has forgotten that in the last presidential election, a pastor named Eddie Villanueva ran for president and got the nod of the Comelec and nobody questioned his running for the presidency. Why? Because he is not Catholic?

Father Panlilio is not running to represent the Church. Neither is he taking orders from it. In running for public office, he is only making use of his right as a citizen under our Constitution. And he is running for office with a platform anchored on good governance and with a mission to end government corruption which we often complain about.

—VICENTE WAJE,
vicwaje@gmail.com

EO 608 'shield' vs opposition Senate

OBVIOUSLY IN AN ATTEMPT TO secure her control over the institutions of power, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo recently signed Executive Order 608, complementing her earlier gag order—Memorandum Circular 108. EO 608 establishes a "national security clearance system" dealing with the release of sensitive documents for public consumption. It is clear that EO 608 is meant to deny her critics any inside information which may prove damaging to her regime.

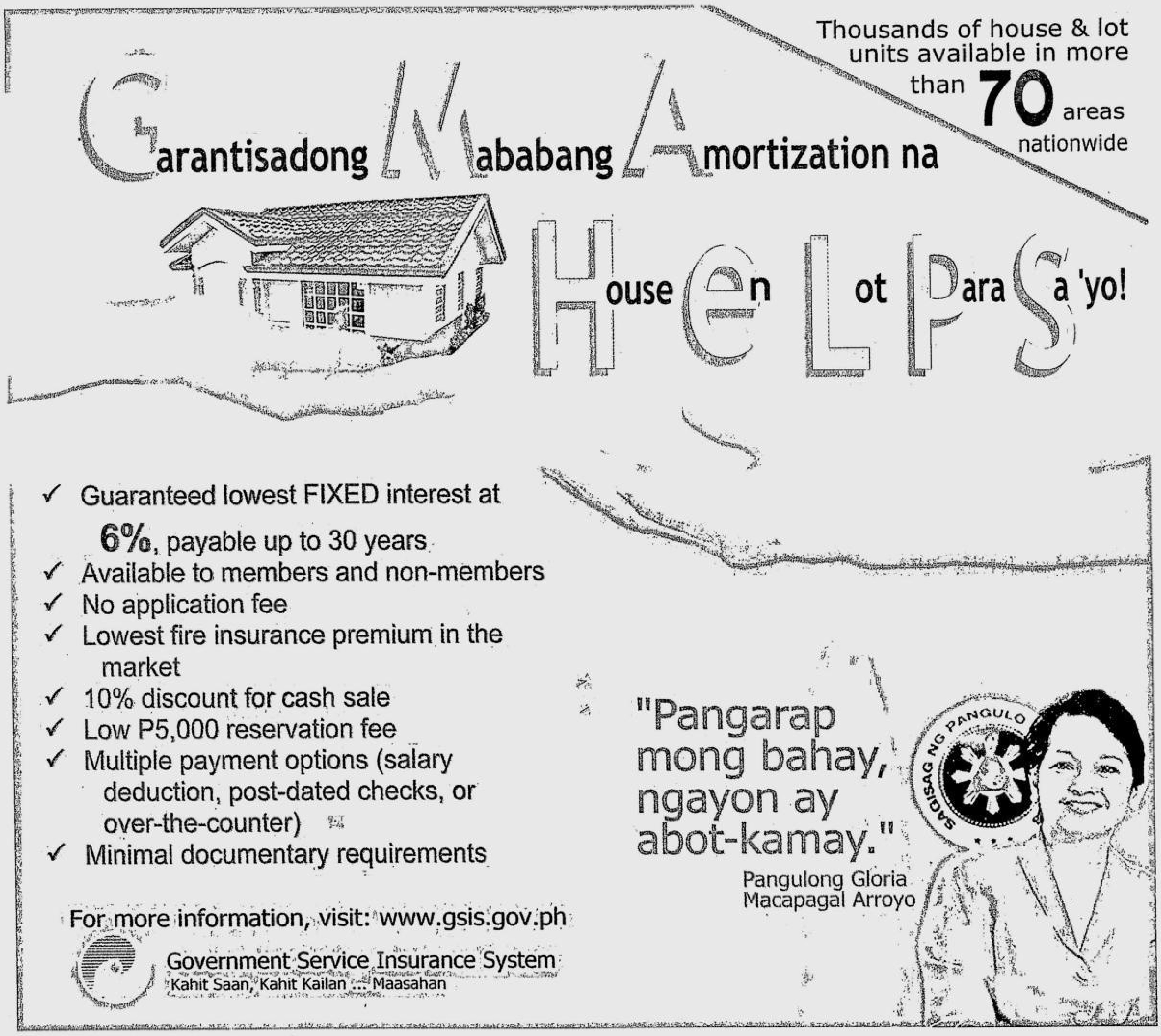
Indeed, this only shows how insecure the Arroyo administration is. Ms Arroyo knows only too well that the coming elections are tipped in her opponents' favor. With her popularity rating at -4 percent (according to the latest SWS survey), she knows only too well that just being identified with her can spell defeat for any of her candidates for the Senate. She thus sees another hostile Senate prying open her closet for skeletons, after these elections.

The EO is part of the Arroyo regime's strategy to cripple public investigations into government irregularities. It once again brings to the fore the regime's allergy to transparency and accountability. It may be recalled that Malacañang issued last year EO 464 which effectively barred ranking government officials from appearing in congressional investigations without Ms Arroyo's authority. The EO was later declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

The refusal of Malacañang to be investigated by Congress is not merely an act of arrogance, it is a deliberate effort to hide the present administration's corrupt acts and dealings from the public. It sends a strong message that from now on the Palace will be doing things under cover—and to hell with public scrutiny. It should thus be taken as a manifestation of more frightening things to come.

It is putting up the shields against an expected opposition Senate, although it will not stop the pro-Arroyo forces from manipulating the results of these elections in her and her allies' favor. It would be foolhardy to not expect that these elections will be marred by yet another round of unscrupulous cheating.

—WILSON FORTALEZA,
national president,
Sanlakas Party List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Pangulong Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

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Thinking global in local politics

LA TRINIDAD mayoral candidate Damaso Bangaoet Jr. explains his vision in PowerPoint presentation. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By Maurice Malanes
La Trinidad, Benguet

A NEOPHYTE POLITICIAN, who is known for pioneering Baguio City's Panagbenga (flower festival), has embarked on a campaign method never tried by any candidate in La Trinidad, Benguet—a PowerPoint presentation of his platform from a laptop and a projector.

From a clip of Google Earth's view of the planet on the first slide, lawyer Damaso Bangaoet Jr. clicked a second slide, which zoomed into Benguet's capital town.

"We may be just a municipality but we have to think global because we are part of a global community. That's why La Trinidad's and Benguet's vegetable industry can be affected by cheap vegetables from other countries like China," Bangaoet said, stressing the need for local officials to be attuned to global developments.

The presentation was Bangaoet's way of launching his mayoral candidacy last month in his house in the village of Tomay.

Bangaoet, who is running as an independent, will face Gregorio Abalos Jr. (LP), William Esteban (Kampi), Artemio Galwan (Lakas-CMD) and Arthur Shontogan (UNO).

Global context

After giving a global context to his "Our Vision for La Trinidad," Bangaoet showed slides with current snapshots of the town, interspersed with those containing his vision.

One slide, for example, showed the public market with a dirty police outpost that looks like a toilet. The next, which incorporated computer graphic arts, showed an improved police outpost painted in blue and white, and a landscaped market.

"This should be the kind of public market and police outpost that we need to have if we want more tourists to visit and spend their money here," he said.

"With a much visible and well-lighted police outpost, people can feel secured," he added.

Bangaoet also had a snapshot of an unkempt entrance and rundown structures, such as a dilapidated greenhouse on the road to the strawberry farms.

For his vision on how to improve the site, he clicked a slide of a well-lighted road adorned with flowers. The rundown greenhouse has been transformed into a souvenir shop.

"I've learned that 90 percent of first-time visitors to the strawberry farms would not like to return because they were not impressed by what they saw," he said.

Vision

"But with a little imagination and some vision, we can offer something which visitors would always look forward to in another visit."

He said the proposed souvenir shop, complete with landscaping, was "doable" within a mayor's three-year term.

The lack of budget should be no problem, he said, because private groups could be tapped through a build-operate-transfer arrangement.

Another slide of Bangaoet's vision is a clip of Google Earth's photo of La Trinidad Valley, with an illustration of proposed bicycle lanes along the major thoroughfares.

"Bicycle lanes are feasible because our town is a valley," Bangaoet said. "We can learn from Marikina City, whose benchmark in its urban development is Singapore."

THINKING/ A18

'We may just be a town but we have to think global because we are part of a global community'

Pangasinan longs to regain its lost glory in cycling

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Asingan, Pangasinan

FOR 14 YEARS NOW, the sleepy town of Asingan in eastern Pangasinan has been celebrating its fiesta every summer, with a cycling race as one highlight.

Fidel Ginez, head of the Agno River flood control system in 1994, launched the event after noticing that Pangasinenses no longer dominated the most-awaited "summer spectacle on wheels"—the Marlboro Tour.

At that time, Ginez recalled, the last native to win the Tour championship was Bernard Llentada (1991)—six years after four province-mates held the crown for five successive years (1981-85). Pangasinan cyclists also dominated the Tour from 1973 to 1977.

"I thought that maybe, there should be a training ground for our cyclists intending to join the Tour to enable Pangasinan to regain its lost glory in cycling," said Ginez, now the Ilocos director of the Department of Public. Works and Highways.

CYCLISTS pass by the Asingan municipal hall to start off the summer spectacle on wheels in Pangasinan, a province that has produced 16 Tour champions. RAY ZAMBRANO

Most-awaited event

The race, now named after Ginez, has become the most-awaited summer event in the province.

On April 22, a record 190 cyclists were at the starting line of the 154-kilometer race, far more than the 144 registered in another local race last year. They included 2003 Tour Pilipinas champion Arnel Quirimit and last year's champion, Santy Barnachea.

"More than the prizes, it's actually the exposure that attracts them to the race, especially when there are big guns participating," said three-time champion Jesus Garcia Jr.

Garcia, who has organized 137 local races since 1974, shared Ginez's observation that Pangasinan cyclists should have a year-round training to be competitive in the grueling, multistage Tour.

"We've had 16 Pangasinense Tour champions in the last 50 years. And every time a Pangasinense does not win the race, it's a mourning year for us cyclists and cycling aficionados," said Garcia, who won in 1973 and twice in 1977.

Aside from Llentada, Garcia, Quirimit and Barnachea, the local champions are Rufino Gabot (1957), Mamerto Eden Sr. (1958), Edmundo de Guzman (1962), Gonzalo Recodos (1963), Teodorico Rimarim (1974), Samson Etrata (1975), Samson Cariño (1975), Modesto Bonzo (1976), Jacinto Sicam (1981, 1982), Romeo Bonzo (1983), Ruben Cariño (1984), and Pepito Calip (1985).

Today, the province has 128 active professional and amateur cyclists and "we see a lot of potential champions in them," Garcia said.

If he had his way, he said he would want 20-year-old Ariel Flores of Mangaldan town, Eduardo Nardo of San Manuel, and Pepito Calosa of San Jacinto to be quartered and properly trained.

"But sadly, we are not able to do this because we do not have the means and we do not get enough support from the local government units," Garcia said.

Competitive

To be competitive, he said, a cyclist must have proper nutrition, good training and discipline.

"Whenever I prepare for a one-day race, I practiced daily, six days a week. For the Tour, I worked out four times a week so that I won't be burned out," he said.

"I also did swimming, basketball, jogging and weights," he added.

Money remains an important factor, Garcia said, as most of the cyclists "do not really have much in life."

Ginez said he financed the purchase of spare parts for the bikes of some cyclists while preparing for the Tour last year.

Among the cyclists Ginez has been supporting are Baler Rabina, Emil Pablo and Edilberto Orpilla, who are from eastern Pangasinan. He also gave them pocket money whenever they left for international competitions.

Pitaki Boys

Garcia's son, Jazy, an Olympian representing Guam in the Sydney Games, takes care of 14 cyclists he fondly calls the "Pitaki Boys." He has built living quarters for them in his compound in Mangaldan.

"He feeds them and spends for their training. That's why the Pitaki Boys have been winning most of the local races," Garcia said.

Among the Pitaki Boys are Quirimit, Ericson Obosa and Sherwin Carrera, who made an impressive 1-2-3 finish in a race in Lingayen town in January.

But despite the difficulties, Garcia said cycling would remain the top sport in Pangasinan. "It is deeply rooted among Pangasinenses from the time Gabot became the first Pangasinense to win the Tour in 1957," he said.

Pangasinan will not run out of cycling talents because the present cycling pool continues to inspire the youth, Garcia said.

Looking back, Garcia said the efforts of those who love the sport, like him and Ginez, had not gone to waste.

With the victory of Quirimit in 2003 and of Barnachea last year in the Tour Pilipinas, it would not be long before Pangasinan regains it lost glory in cycling.

PANGASINAN'S TOUR CHAMPS

Name	Year	Hometown
Rufino Gabot	1957	Laoac
Mamerto Eden Sr.	1958	Mapandan
Edmundo de Guzman	1962	Lingayen
Gonzalo Recodos	1963	Laoac
Jesus Garcia Jr.	1973, 1977	Mangaldan
Teodorico Rimarim	1974	Basista
Samson Etrata	1975	Binalonan
Samson Cariño	1975	Mangaldan
Modesto Bonzo	1976	Sual
Jacinto Sicam	1981, 1982	San Manuel
Romeo Bonzo	1983	Sual
Ruben Cariño	1984	Mangaldan
Pepito Calip	1985	Binalonan
Bernard Llentada	1991	San Nicolas
Arnel Quirimit	2003	Pozorrubio
Santy Barnachea	2006	Umingan

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Thinking global ...

From page A17

Saying the candidate's vision was "concrete enough," a woman leader from the village of Pico said she would help organize public forums where Bangaoet's presentation could be shown.

Bangaoet, whose proposed programs focus on agriculture, tourism and education, said that if he would be elected, he would sit down with the officials of the Benguet State University, which owns more than half of La Trinidad Valley, to coordinate the development of this town of almost 70,000 people.

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Bishop asks Comelec, watchdog to probe Pampanga vote-buying

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—PAMPANGA BISHOP Pablo Virgilio David on Tuesday asked the Commission on Elections and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) in the province to look into the alleged vote-buying activities of a Pampanga gubernatorial candidate.

"We have been receiving countless text messages from vigilant parishioners about people being herded by [Board member Lilia] Pineda in gyms, cockpit arenas and schools. Even public school teachers are being visited and made to line up for cash gifts," David said.

He said he brought this to the attention of Comelec and PPCRV in keeping with the March 31 pastoral statement of Archbishop Paciano Aniceto.

In that statement, Aniceto called on voters to reject candidates involved in "jueteng and other forms of illegal gambling, indiscriminate and corrupt quarrying, vote-buying, any form of cheating in the elections, exorbitant campaigning, violence and extrajudicial killings, illegal drug business."

Venues

The archbishop said he was concerned about the recent incidents and was issuing another pastoral statement on those, David said.

The so-called herding continued on Tuesday, monitored in Mexico and San Simon towns. Several reporters saw the parking lot of the Mabuhay Coliseum, a cockpit here, filled with more than 100 vehicles bearing posters of Pineda, wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

Lilia Pineda said she invited people to "give importance to them."

"They live in far places so I tried to gather them and tell them my platform," she said.

Asked why cockpits were among the venues, she said those were big enough to accommodate many people.

Pineda said in those gatherings, "I told the people that I am not buying their votes. I told them that if they should choose me, it has to be out of their free will."

"My conscience is clear. I do not buy voters," she said.

If she spent money, she said it was for "food and water since they did not have these to bring with them."

Temie Lambino, Comelec provincial supervisor, did not reply to calls and text messages inquiring whether his office had received similar reports.

Vigilance

Fr. Francis Dizon, provincial PPCRV chair, said their town chapters continued to collate reports.

"It is easy to know what constitutes vote-buying by just reading Provision 261 of the Omnibus Election Code. That law bans political candidates to give money, grant favor or make promises to induce voters to vote for them or against their rivals," he said.

David said he was shocked when he watched a local cable TV news program showing Pineda giving money to people and stating she would continue helping needy people during the campaign period.

Reelectionist Gov. Mark Lapid and Fr. Eddie Panlilio, another gubernatorial bet, have decried the incidents in separate statements. Three other aspirants for governor—Elly Pamatong, Edna Guillermo and Arnold Maniago—have yet to issue statements on the issue.

Lapid said his lawyers have started taking the testimonies of witnesses who have "personal knowledge of vote-buying, which has become very rampant."

"Our reports show that barangay chairmen are being given P5,000 [each] and councilmen P3,000 [each]. Ordinary citizens who are gathered to attend meetings were also being given P300 to P500," he said.

Lapid said his father, Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, was also "alarmed" by these incidents. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Mandaue mayor says politics in lamppost damaged city

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE DAMAGE HAS been done.

Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano said there was not much he could say on what he said were politically motivated charges that lampposts installed in his city for the Asean summit were overpriced.

"The damage has been done already—the damage they have done to the city, the damage they have done to the province, even the entire country," said Ouano.

He said he wasn't planning to sue people who destroyed his reputation over the lamppost issue. "I leave it to God."

He said he would just wait for the outcome of the case even as he continued to deny any involvement in the alleged overpricing of the lamppost project. In the meantime, he said he would help his son, who is seeking to replace him as mayor, in the campaign.

Investment impact

However, Ouano decried the negative impact of the controversy on Mandaue City's investment potential.

While the Ombudsman said it does not consider the preventive suspension imposed on Ouano and 19 other local and public works and highways officials as a sanction, Ouano said the investors would look at it in a negative light.

Investors would now think twice over investing in Mandaue City.

The controversy had placed Mandaue City, the province of Cebu and the country in a bad light, Ouano pointed out.

In his nine years of service as mayor, Ouano said he had worked hard to give Mandaue its own identity internationally.

He also reiterated his earlier claim that the allegation against him was politically motivated because it happened during the election time.

Politics

Supporters of Ouano earlier said politicians out to take over the city government of Mandaue were behind the controversy over the lampposts.

Contractors that installed the lampposts denied the overpricing, saying detractors made wrong computations.

Because of his suspension, Mandaue City is now politically unstable, Ouano said.

Ouano was one of the 19 local and public work officials who were being placed under a six-month preventive suspension in connection with the ongoing investigation of the alleged overpricing of the lampposts project.

Just last Friday, Alfredo Sanchez, a Mandaue city engineer implicated in the controversy, claimed that Ouano's daughter-in-law Cheryl Ouano forced him to sign the program of works and estimate.

Cheryl reportedly received instructions from the mayor himself, Sanchez said in his affidavit submitted to the Ombudsman.

TIME OUT
Team Unity (TU) senatorial candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson finds time to treat children to a fishball feast during a break in one of his sorties in Pampanga. Singson vows to sponsor a legislative measure to make education accessible to children in the provinces. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Bus with Palaro athletes hits another; 4 die, 40 hurt

By Estanislao Caldez and Villamor Visaya Jr.
Inquirer Northern Luzon

TUGUEGARAO CITY—SCHOOL OFFICIALS in Cagayan on Tuesday prepared a welcome program and breakfast for the province's delegates to the recently concluded Palarong Pambansa to celebrate the group's feat in basketball, sepak takraw and football.

However, the welcome party to honor the athletes who gave Cagayan top 10 finishes in sepak takraw, basketball and football did not push through when officials here learned that the bus carrying the student athletes and school officials met an accident in Cordon, Isabela, at past midnight Tuesday.

Police in Cordon said four people, one of them a student athlete, were killed and 40 others were injured when their bus was hit by another bus along the national highway in Barangay Capirpirwan.

Senior Supt. Dominador Aquino, Isabela police director, said one of the tires of the Tuguegarao-bound Florida Liner bus burst as it was negotiating a downhill curve. The bus swerved and was hit by an oncoming Victory Liner bus.

Aquino said Shane Apolonio, a Baggao town native and a member of the sepak takraw team that placed third in the Palaro; Leonardo Adriano, a school principal from Amulung town; Manolo Magugac, a football trainor from Alcala town; and Jimboy Espejo, alternate driver of the Florida bus, died while being taken to the Javonillo Hospital in Cordon.

At least 33 of the injured were passengers of the Florida Bus while the rest were from the Victory Liner bus.

They were taken to the De Vera Hospital and the Cagayan Valley Sanitarium and Hospital in Santiago City, about 10 km from the accident site.

Reports said two of the injured passengers—Maynard Anog and Raymart Disintorum—were in critical condition at the Cagayan Valley Sanitarium and Hospital. *With a report from Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Bet's kin turn against him

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—RELATIVES OF A MAYORAL candidate in Pulupandan, Negros Occidental have thrown their support behind his opponent.

The mother and brother of Pulupandan mayoral candidate Magdaleno Peña on Saturday expressed their support for Samson Mondia, a candidate for mayor running against Peña.

Peña's mother Lina, brother Bonifacio and former live-in partner Plinky Recto showed up on Saturday as several town residents gathered in front of the Pulupandan police station. The crowd booed as police brought in for questioning Peña's men following the firing of shots at the house of a town councilor who was among those subject to eviction.

The three also said they are behind those whom Peña wanted to evict from their homes.

Another relative, Gretchen Cojuangco, wife of business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco, joined them later and whose arrival was cheered by the crowd outside the police station.

Cojuangco said she was in Pulupandan because her first cousin, Lina Peña, asked her to join them.

But Peña remained unfazed by the stand taken by his family.

"My beautiful mom, girlfriend, *tita*, all (are) under the hot sun. I never thought I would merit so much attention. I am flattered," Peña said in reaction to the presence of his relatives.

Lina said her son, Magdaleno, is not a good person because he has even turned against her, his own mother.

"I am his mother and I know what kind of person he is," she said, adding that she was also standing by Recto. Lina said she believed what Recto has said against her son.

Recto has charged Magdaleno with physical abuse, but he has denied the allegation.

Recto said she was in Pulupandan "to support Tita Lina and the people she is supporting in the town."

"I hope the people vote for the right mayor of Pulupandan. A lot has happened to the mother and *lola* of my child and to me. Is it right to choose a mayor who hurts people and gets land that is not his?" she asked.

She said she has also been deprived of her right as a mother from seeing her child.

Since September she has not been able to see her son who is in the custody of Magdaleno, she said.

ELEKSYON 2007

War preventing relief from reaching refugees

PATIKUL, SULU—PEACE ADVOCATES continue to call for a stop to military operations in the island-province to open the way for relief to some 60,000 refugees who fled the fighting.

Earlier, groups like the Darul Ifta of the Philippines, Mindanao Peaceweavers and the Sug People's Alliance of Tausug or Sugpat, also expressed concern over the growing number of displaced families due to the military operation against the Abu Sayyaf and combatants of the Moro National Liberation front (MNLF), headed by Ustadz Habier Malik.

Fr. Angel Calvo, president of the Peace Advocates Zamboanga, said it appears that the government's goal of turning "war zone" Sulu into an "economic zone" had been forgotten with the military offensives.

"(Now it's) back to war zone again. Thousands of people (are) rendered homeless because of the renewed fighting between the military and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)," he said.

Calvo said people in the affected areas are going hungry because they have no access to food.

"Even as loads and tons of food arrived at the port of Jolo ... sadly it is taking ages to distribute them to the evacuees," he said.

Earlier, relief agencies, such as the Red Cross, said they could not penetrate the evacuees because of the fighting.

The military also allegedly refused to issue clearance to groups trying to bring in food for the evacuees.

But Maj. Gen. Reuben Rafael, chief of Task Force Comet, said all the military wanted was to be informed before relief groups come in.

"We need to know their plans so we could also include them in our plans," he said.

Rafael said this was important "because the situation in the area is very fluid" and that relief workers could get caught in the crossfire.

But it appears that peace advocates are not the only ones who want the war to stop.

Julie Alipala with a report from Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

Pulse Asia reveals Puerto trend

SURVEY RESULTS CONDUCTED BY Pulse Asia Inc. on March 20-22 showed reelectionist Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn and his team being favored by voters.

The voter preference survey showed that Hagedorn got 79 percent votes from the respondent base of 300 registered voters, 18 years old and above, a statement sent to the INQUIRER said.

His opponent, Eduardo Matillano, a retired police general, got 14 percent and the remaining 7 percent votes were undecided, nonvoting or refused to be polled, added the statement.

Hagedorn said the results "will probably change with a bigger margin of victory" for him and his ticket because of the arrest of SPO1 Alfredo Carandang, personal bodyguard of Matillano and suspected killer of Puerto Princesa City's assistant Comelec chief Petronilo Amorin Jr.

Amorin was shot dead as he was walking down the national highway in the city's Barangay San Pedro on April 3.

Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI deputy director for regional operations service, earlier said the killing might have been triggered by the victim's refusal to provide an advance copy of the provincial voters' list to a politician.

Matillano denied any involvement in the case and had lobbied for Comelec control of the province "to have credible and peaceful elections." *Joanna Los Baños, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Labor rejects GMA's Labor Day gift

From page A1

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, a moderate labor umbrella organization.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue issued a similar directive last year, but employers apparently were not heeding it.

The executive order, which drew applause from the TUCP members, will exempt wages of up to P10,500 a month from the income tax. The minimum daily wage in Metro Manila is P350—P300 in basic pay and P50 as allowance. *(See In the Know.)*

The House of Representatives, through a bill authored by former Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, passed such a measure last year, but it got stranded in the Senate.

Lapus said the withholding tax on wage earners would amount to P8 billion a year, a small amount compared to the revenue generated from consumers through the 12-percent value-added tax.

Ms Arroyo also used the occasion to campaign for the administration senatorial candidates and two labor party-list groups—TUCP and Aksa.

"For our Team Unity congressmen and senators, if in case they win, they can commit in the next Congress ... to pass a law exempting wage earners from paying income tax," she said, to the delight of the crowd.

The President said she was "urging the regional tripartite wage boards to speed up the resolution of pending wage (petitions)."

The House of Representatives approved in December a P125-wage increase spread over a three-year period, while a Senate committee recommended a similar increase. Malacañang, however, rejected the proposed wage hikes.

TUCP president Democrito Mendoza said that because of the President's order, regional wage boards outside Metro Manila did not have to wait for petitions to be filed.

Wage increase by July

This was confirmed by Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, who said a new round of wage hikes could be out by July, in accordance with the law that says wage hikes should come a year apart.

REACHING OUT TO LABOR: President Arroyo chats with Democrito Mendoza, president of the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, and Vice President Noli de Castro during Labor Day rites at the Folk Arts Theater at the Cultural Center complex in Pasay City. LYN RILLON

Mendoza said he expected some five million workers to benefit directly from the coming wage increases.

He said employers can afford to give wage hikes because business was good. The TUCP earlier petitioned for a P75 increase in the minimum wage for workers in Metro Manila.

As expected, militant labor groups rejected the nonwage benefits announced by the President.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, Alliance of Progressive Labor, Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) and the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino said a legislated wage increase and full employment would address the hunger and poverty stalking workers.

The militant groups also expressed their opposition to wage hikes being coursed through the regional wage boards.

Rejection

Instead of exempting minimum wage earners from the withholding tax, PM wanted tax exemptions for workers earning less than the daily cost of living that it placed at P768.

The Center for Trade Union and Human Rights said that under the Arroyo administration, workers "still suffer the same woes," namely, low wages, unemployment, job insecurity, unfavorable labor conditions and suppression of rights.

While militant labor groups were demanding a P125-across-the-board wage increase to cope with the rising cost of living, Ms Arroyo chose to focus on cheaper housing and easy loan terms.

She cited as part of the workers' welfare the "Gwapotel" in Port Area, Manila, a workers' inn where an overnight stay will cost only P25. She unveiled the inn earlier in the day.

Dressed in flaming red, a combative President twice took a swipe at "critics" and those trying "to bring down the economy and the country."

"It's true that many are jobless. But who among the critics generated one million jobs a year? It's only us in the administration," said Ms Arroyo.

She pointed out that her predecessor only generated 500,000 jobs in two years compared to the 1.5 million jobs created from between 2006 and January 2007 under her administration.

APL chair Danilo Edralin said he would not be surprised if the jobs created were mostly part-time and contractual.

This, he said, may be gleaned from the quality of the jobs offered in government-sponsored job fairs like the one held at Rizal Park yesterday, which was reported to be offering up to 40,000 jobs.

"In less than six months down the road, the contractual workers will be back on the streets, looking for work because the jobs offered in such fairs are mere replacement posts, and not really newly created jobs," he said.

How gov't helps

The President enumerated the steps taken by the government to alleviate the plight of the workers, including the following:

- Pag-Ibig Fund—P6 billion worth of dividends and P30 billion more in loans for tuition and medical emergencies; continued condonation of loan penalties; additional P25 billion as fund for housing loan; 6 percent interest (for loans up to P300,000) payable in 30 years; a "bonus for early birds" of a 2-percentage point off from the principal for pre-terminated loans, and special discounts for foreclosed housing units.
- Government Service and Insurance System—"Strengthening" of the scholarship grants, 10-month salary loan programs, lower interest for restructured loans and improved services to members through computerization.
- Social Security System—Flexifund for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) and their inclusion in SSS coverage as informal members.
- Department of Labor and Employment—"Expose" Internet scam on nonexisting foreign jobs; help in reintegration program for returning OFWs; free assessment and certification from Tesda; standby revolving fund for repatriation of OFWs and setting up a pension fund, and P50 million for "child labor program."

KMU president Elmer Labog assailed the housing loan discounts and social security benefits announced by Ms Arroyo, saying that workers could hardly avail themselves of the discounts because their meager wages were barely enough for food expenditures and utilities.

IN THE KNOW

No fizz in the Cola

THE DAILY MINIMUM WAGE THAT A private sector worker gets is composed of a basic wage and the cost of living allowance (Cola).

The Cola is a stipend given by employers to workers to cover, at least partly, the increase in everyday expenses.

The minimum wages vary per region, as these are set by regional wage boards established in 1989.

Before, the minimum wage was set through acts of Congress, presidential decrees or executive orders. The Aquino administration decided to regionalize wage settings because the "economic realities" in the regions are different from those in Metro Manila.

How minimum wage is set

In determining minimum wages, the regional wage boards consider changes in cost of living, the consumer price index and the employers' capacity to pay, among others.

Currently, Metro Manila offers the highest minimum wage, which ranges from P313 to P350. This includes a P50 in Cola.

Bicol region has the lowest minimum wage for non-agricultural workers (between P177 and P220, including a Cola of P15.)

For agricultural workers, the Mimaropa region (Mindoro Occidental, Mindoro Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) has the lowest wage, which is between P163 and P192.

P204 per day

A family of five needs at least P6,195 a month or P204 a day to maintain an "economically decent" lifestyle, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board.

Workers often demand an increase in the basic pay, not in the Cola, because an increase in the former would translate to higher overtime and night differential pay. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Militants hold three separate rallies, remain divided

From page A1

Holding three separate demonstrations in the capital, about 5,000 militants representing leftist groups pressed their demands for higher wages and other benefits but were turned back by riot troops in their attempt to march to the Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) Bridge near Malacañang.

In one of the rallies, banners trumpeting labor issues were outnumbered by colorful streamers of party-list groups appealing for votes in the May 14 elections.

Campaign volunteers handed out pocket calendars and stickers of senatorial wannabes, all but turning the rally into one big campaign sortie.

It was just a coincidence, Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said.

"We join Labor Day celebrations every year. It just so happened that this is an election period," he told the INQUIRER.

The demonstrations were generally peaceful, except for an incident in which some protesters allegedly beat up a suspected military intelligence agent at Liwasang Bonifacio, Commission on Human Rights official Carmelita Rosete told the INQUIRER.

Symbolic bridge

In the first rally of the day, about 1,000 members of the party-list group Akbayan marched toward Malacañang but were blocked by police on Nicanor Reyes Street.

Led by Akbayan Representatives Etta Rosales and Risa Hontiveros, the group asked to be allowed to move on but were spurned. But they were permitted to hold a program consisting of speeches and songs.

"At least dito, amoy na yung Mendiola Bridge (we can smell Mendiola Bridge)," Hontiveros said.

"The bridge of Mendiola is very symbolic," added Rosales.

Different orientations

Hours later, Anakpawis and party-list groups Bayan Muna, Gabriela, Suara, Kabataan and others held their own protests at Liwasang Bonifacio.

"They were never together with us every Labor Day. They always held a separate rally. We respect them for that," Rosales said.

"We have different political orientations. We have our respective political platforms," Mariano said.

Party-list group Sanlakas held its own rally at Plaza Miranda, announcing early on that it would march to Mendiola, only to cancel the march later.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, who was recently released by the Supreme Court after being detained on murder charges he claimed were fabricated by the military, pressed for the release of detained fellow leftist leader and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran.

Bail for Ka Bel

The Anakpawis leader has been under hospital arrest for months on rebellion charges.

Ocampo said the government should honor the statements of key officials that they would not oppose Beltran's bail application.

Beltran's camp had asked the court to allow him a few hours of freedom so he could attend the rally but the plea was denied, organizers said.

The 3,000 ralliers gathered at Liwasan included a 15-year-old boy named Raymond, who held up a streamer attached to a bamboo pole and said he would be paid P150 for his work.

Rain fell briefly in the afternoon as the protesters prepared to march to Mendiola, easing the day's scorching summer heat.

In the Visayas

Some of the Labor Day celebrations in the Visayas also turned into political rallies.

About 4,000 gathered in separate venues in Bacolod City, as party-list groups, such as Bayan Muna, Kabataan, Gabriela, Suara Bangsamoro, Anakpawis and Partido ng Manggagawa sought the support of the labor sector.

In Tacloban City, 500 members of different militant groups staged a march, while about 2,000 workers from government and private companies gathered inside the air-conditioned Tacloban City Convention Center.

In Iloilo City, around 3,000 protesters joined Labor Day protest rallies. Some 2,000 gathered at the provincial capitol and 1,000 at the Jaro district plaza.

Many of the protesters at the provincial capitol carried placards with pictures of missing activists Nilo Arado and Ma. Luisa Posa-Dominado.

In Kalibo, Aklan, around 500 protesters led by Bayan Muna mounted a caravan from the towns of Ibajay, Tangalan and Numancia before holding a rally at Pastrana Park.

Around 1,000 protesters led by Anakpawis and Gabriela joined a similar rally at the Roxas City Bandstand in Capiz.

In Cebu City, around 3,000 workers belonging to the Associated Labor Unions-TUCP took to the streets yesterday to call for a wage increase.

Southern Luzon

In Legazpi City, various groups that staged a rally at the Pinaglabanan Monument said the calamities that had struck the region made life even harder for every Bicolano.

In Sorsogon City, tense moments marked the multisectoral rally after its leaders confronted suspected military intelligence agents who were taking pictures of participants.

At the Crossing in Calamba City, around 2,000 farmers, workers and representatives of the urban poor gathered at 3 p.m. to press for the release of Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran and demand a P125 across-the-board wage increase.

Multisectoral groups also staged rallies in the cities of Tanauan and Lipa in Batangas, San Pablo in Laguna and Rosario, Cavite.

In Pampanga, more than 1,200 workers from three major economic zones in Central Luzon marched and held a program in the City of San Fernando until 11 a.m.

At the rally organized by the Manggagawa para sa Kalayaan ng Bayan, workers spoke of low wages and the failure of many employers to pay the P230 daily minimum wage in the region.

Also in San Fernando, more than 400 workers belonging to the Workers Alliance in Central Luzon spent Labor Day campaigning for the party-list group Anakpawis through a province-wide motorcade.

In Subic, Zambales, the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas reported that 30 of its members were stopped by Army soldiers from leaving town to join protest rallies.

In Baguio City, Anakpawis launched a campaign rally by endorsing senatorial candidates who promised to pursue a wage bill should they be elected.

Fernando Bagyan, Anakpawis coordinator in the city, said they wanted the May 14 elections to be the ratification of what he referred to as "a new wage consciousness," by campaigning strongly for the Genuine Opposition's Manuel Villar, Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Alan Peter Cayetano and Aquilino Pimentel III.

Bagwan also asked voters to include Team Unity's Joker Arroyo and Ralph Recto and independent candidate Francis Pangilinan on their list. *With reports from Carla P. Gomez, Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Felipe Celino, Jhunnex Napallacan, Joey A. Gabieta and Ven Labro, Inquirer Visayas; Ephraim Aguilar, Niña Catherine Calleja and Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon; Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

'We need higher wages to make ends meet'

MARIA MOAH CARTAGENA, AN OFFICE worker in Makati City, was not among the hundreds of activists who took part in the Labor Day protests yesterday.

Neither were Jefferson Carel and Jonathan Buñag, who work in the same commercial strip on J. P. Rizal Street as Cartagena.

But in spirit and sympathy, the three may well have been in the streets along with the overworked, underpaid and disgruntled workers and government employees.

They consider themselves fortunate for having decent jobs, but they know it's not just about luck.

Cartagena, 27, who works for Cebuana Lhuillier pawnshop, says salaries don't rise as fast as prices increase.

Exhausted

"You're so exhausted at work yet you earn such a measly amount. All that tiredness for very little," she says.

Buñag agrees. "We really need higher wages just to make ends meet," he says.

"If your salary is just enough, you spend everything, and you can't save," the 25-year-old says.

Buñag, who works for Western Union, says he earns roughly P10,000 a month, plus health insurance, medical benefits, monthly rice allowance and up to a 15th month bonus.

Being single, he says he can make do with his salary, but hopes for an increase so he can save enough to start a family.

Spending within means

For 29-year-old Carel, who works for LBC Bank and earns between P27,000 and P30,000 a month, it's all about the efficient management of money.

"It's the way I handle my life using the money that I have," he says.

"Other people keep spending beyond their means. It's a matter of budget and priority," he says.

But Cartagena says keeping to a budget is not easy. "It always comes to a point in which the money is just not enough," she says.

She says any wage increase depends on the government. "It's because our company won't increase our wages unless the government says so."

"I have an aunt who regularly goes to Liwasang Bonifacio (in Manila) to protest. She's fighting for the P125 increase per day," she says. "I hope she succeeds."

While thousands of workers staged rallies across the country yesterday, others still reported for work.

Dennis Derama, a 23-year-old sales promodizer at the Kitchenware section of SM Manila, says he's only after the double pay he will be getting for working on a holiday.

"I don't care much about rallies, because rallies often get chaotic. And besides, my priority are the bills I have to pay," he says.

Wife a babysitter abroad

A father to a 2-year-old boy, Derama says his meager salary from working as a contractual employee at the department store has forced his wife to work as a babysitter abroad.

"But she still couldn't afford to send us money regularly because she just left last December. In fact, I'm still paying for the money I borrowed from a loan shark for her placement fee," he says.

He says his salary is barely enough for him and his baby, who now stays with his parents in Cebu.

From the P9,000 monthly salary he gets, P5,000 goes to his son in the province.

"I also give P1,500 for electricity to my elder brother because I live in his house. That's my share. The rest is for my daily expenses," he says.

Architecture graduate

"Basically I have to live with P100 a day—P50 for lunch, P40 for transportation and P10 for coffee. I could no longer afford to save some money," he says.

A 2004 architecture graduate from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Derama says he has to endure his job because he can't afford to take the board exam.

"I don't have a budget for that now. It's not my priority at this time, especially now that I have a baby. But I still hope to take the exam someday, perhaps when I get a more stable job," he says.

Plan to relocate

Derama's five-month contract will expire at the end of the month. He says he's considering to relocate in Cebu, his hometown where, he says, "life is a lot easier."

Diodito Reloban, 36, a staff at the mayor's office of the Manila City Hall, wishes he could send his two daughters to a private school.

"Who wouldn't want their children to study in a good school? As much as I want to, my salary couldn't really afford it," he says.

Positive outlook

"We still get to eat three times a day. That's enough. That's what's important," he adds. "Sometimes, when I'm short of money, I'm forced to borrow money from my officemates."

But despite his situation, Reloban is keeping a positive outlook, saying that life would eventually become better for Filipinos.

A city government employee since the time of Mayor Mel Lopez, Reloban says his life has somehow improved.

"It's definitely a lot better now. Times were much harder before," he said.

Family planning

But Jay Soriano, a 32-year-old housekeeper at a hotel in Manila, thinks otherwise. In fact, he says, the difficult times have forced him and his wife to resort to family planning.

"We don't intend to have another baby. Times are hard," Soriano says. He has a 3-year-old daughter.

A hotel and restaurant management graduate, Soriano claims that given the chance, he will transfer to another job that allows him to earn more.

His biggest daily expense is transportation fare because he lives in Dasamariñas, Cavite.

"It's a good thing we get free food at work. That's a big help for me," he says. *Kimberly Tan, Tina G. Santos and Cyrian S. Agujo*

Hero of Earth buried with honors

From page A1

such a tribute.

His wife Helen and their children all wore white as they marched with family, friends and officials of the DENR toward Angchangco's final resting place, just a few meters from the grave of National Artist NVM Gonzales.

During the necrological service earlier, friends recalled his dedication to his vision and his job.

"He really wanted to be a law enforcer," said forester Jose Elmer Bacos. "Many times, he went after small-time crooks with an unlicensed firearm," he said.

As a DENR investigator in Quezon, Angchangco was up early in the morning and waited on the riverbanks for "hot logs" to float downstream.

"It was the first time that I worked with him, and I thought he was just trying to impress me," said a colleague, Dennis Guerrero.

At around 10 a.m. that day in July last year, Guerrero and Angchangco intercepted more than the usual number of hot logs. Guerrero was ready to pack up and rest, but was startled when Angchangco piped up, "Attorney, there's still one more. Why don't we wait for it?"

Hardworking

"I thought he just wanted to show off at the time. But Audy was not like that. He was very hardworking," Guerrero said.

Just before his murder, Angchangco was working to clamp down on illegal loggers operating in Agusan province.

He was part of the team that implemented the successful "Oplan Baykuran" last year in the Quezon and Rizal portions of the Sierra Madre mountain range.

ANGCHANGCO: A happy green warrior

"Oplan Baykuran" was a massive government anti-illegal logging project last year in the southern Sierra Madre, which resulted in the confiscation of illegally cut logs and cutting paraphernalia worth millions of pesos.

Guerrero described his friend and colleague as a generous fellow with "smiling eyes."

"He was what I call a happy worker. He was happy doing his work because he was happy with his work," Asis Perez of Tanggol Kalikasan fondly remembered.

He lived his principles

"I would sometimes kid him, are you really an agent or a cook? Because he was happy doing whatever job was given him, even if it was in the kitchen," Perez said.

His sister Rose said she had pleaded with her brother not to continue in his job, fearing for his safety.

"But he told me, 'it is a commitment to my work.' He lived his principles. That's the way he was," she said.

Not even his birthday could stop him from reporting for work. Guerrero recalled that on the eve of Angchangco's birthday, his office received information of hot logs floating down the river and he went to investigate.

Angchangco took his job so seriously that he became very sensitive if he had the slightest feeling that his superiors had doubts about him.

"If he was unable to apprehend or intercept hot logs, he felt bad. He didn't want his bosses to think that he was in cahoots with the syndicate," said Bacos.

34,000 hot logs seized

Through Angchangco's efforts, his office was able to seize more than 34,000 hot logs in the Sierra Madre area.

"He did not want to give illegal loggers a chance to rest and recover. He was a key figure and one of our most productive special investigators," Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes said.

Reyes said the murder was meant to scare off his men, but he added, "we are not and will never be intimidated."

Environment Undersecretary Roy Kyamko said several environmental groups were thinking of putting up a foundation to continue what Angchangco had fought so hard for.

He said that the World Wildlife Fund for Nature had pledged P50,000 for Angchangco's children to continue their schooling.

"How ironic that an environmental law enforcer became an environmental hero on the day that we had dedicated to the earth," Kyamko lamented, referring to Earth Day.

But for Bacos, Angchangco never dreamed of being called a hero of the earth from which he came.

"It was not his dream. He just wanted to be a law enforcer," he said. *With reports from Hershey D. Homol and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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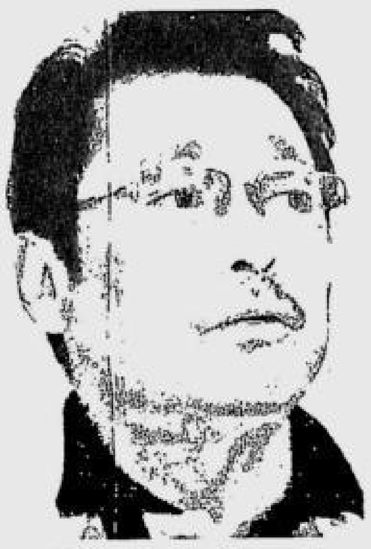
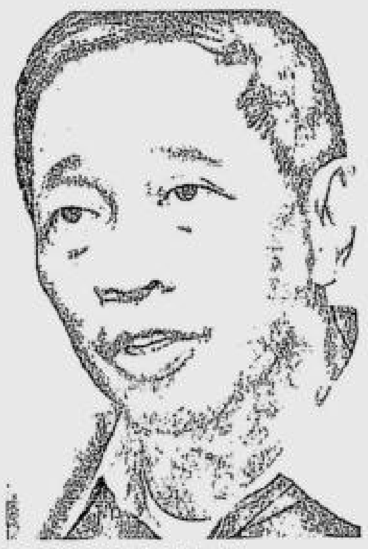


LAPID: Conversant in yes or no



BINAY: This is Makati.

Binay-Lapid battle heats up over English

From page A1

Mayor Jejomar Binay counters the good senator can't take an interpreter along with him wherever he goes, especially when the talking gets tough.

In Round One of the Binay-Lapid battle for political control of the country's financial center, the incumbent and the challenger traded barbs over how Lapid could survive Makati's corporate jungle with his limited command of English.

Binay said he did not mean to insult Lapid's intelligence but anyone who wants to be mayor of Makati should have something to show in terms of educational attainment.

"In Makati, you have to meet Ivy Leaguers. I went to Harvard … I never denigrated him because of his education … But it goes without saying that this is Makati," Binay said in an interview last weekend.

"You have to attend international conferences. It would be unseemly if you have to have an interpreter for that," the mayor told the INQUIRER.

Guerrero vs Rambotito

Lapid said: "*Hindi naman ako ganun katanga sa Ingles* (I'm not that stupid in English)."

"*Yung tipong kahit* yes or no *alam ko naman e. Yung* ladies and gentlemen *alam ko rin* (When it comes to yes or no, I know that. I also know 'ladies and gentlemen')," Lapid joked in an interview on Monday.

Lapid, known for his underdog roles in films, only got as far as high school in his studies. Fans sometimes refer to him as "Leon Guerrero," a cowboy he played in the movies.

Binay has a law diploma from the University of the Philippines, among other post-graduate degrees. During the 1987 coup, he came out wearing a bullet-proof vest and people began calling him "Rambotito" (Little Rambo).

Humble roots, both

Speaking in Filipino, Lapid said: "All I can say is, I can go all by myself to the United States." He meant he could get by among Americans.

"I can eat alone in a restaurant and come back here, and pay my bill at a restaurant," he added.

But Binay was not impressed by Lapid's claim of having humble roots.

"I also grew up poor. We both grew up poor," he said. "But I forced myself to study. As we are now saying, the best social equalizer is education."

Challenge accepted

Lapid said he was accepting Binay's challenge to a debate. But he had one condition: The debate should be in Filipino—or better yet, in Kapampangan, the dialect of his home province Pampanga.

"*Papayag ako, kahit saan, kahit kelan* (I will accept, wherever, whenever)," Lapid said.

"*Pag-i-Inglesin niya ako e. Sigurado yun, alam ko namang ang yabang-yabang niyan* (I am sure he's going to make me speak English … He's very arrogant," he said.

Committee of No Talk

Lapid said a debate in Filipino would also be fine and wondered how Binay would be able to handle that, pointing out that there were some English words that could not be translated into Filipino.

"*Baka mapahiya rin siya* (He might just embarrass himself)," he said.

Binay said Lapid was a member of the "committee of silence" in the Senate, referring to a group of senators who were rarely heard during floor discussions.

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Court allows Erap to see mom, docs

DETAINED FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada was given a nine-hour pass by the Sandiganbayan to visit his mother today on her 102nd birthday as well as undergo further hospital tests for his chest pains.

At 8 a.m., Estrada is expected to undergo cardiac examination at the San Juan Medical Center. Afterward, he will see Mary Ejercito at the latter's residence on Kennedy Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

By 5 p.m., the court order said, he should be on his way back to his Tanay, Rizal resort, where police are keeping him under house arrest in connection with this P4-billion plunder case.

Estrada last enjoyed a furlough when he turned 70 years old on April 19 and celebrated with family and allies in the political opposition at his own Greenhills residence. It was his sixth birthday celebration since his arrest in April 2001.

Prior to that gathering, Estrada underwent an electrocardiogram test at the Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center. His personal doctor, Lorenze Hocson, later pronounced his patient to be having "abnormalities" in his heart, particularly a "right bundle branch block."

This means there is a delay or weakness in the transmission of electrical impulses from his heart, Hocson explained.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, the lead prosecutor in the Estrada plunder trial, recently expressed confidence that the landmark case may finally be resolved this year—or as early as July.

According to a court-approved schedule, the case will be considered submitted for decision by May 25, Villa-Ignacio said.

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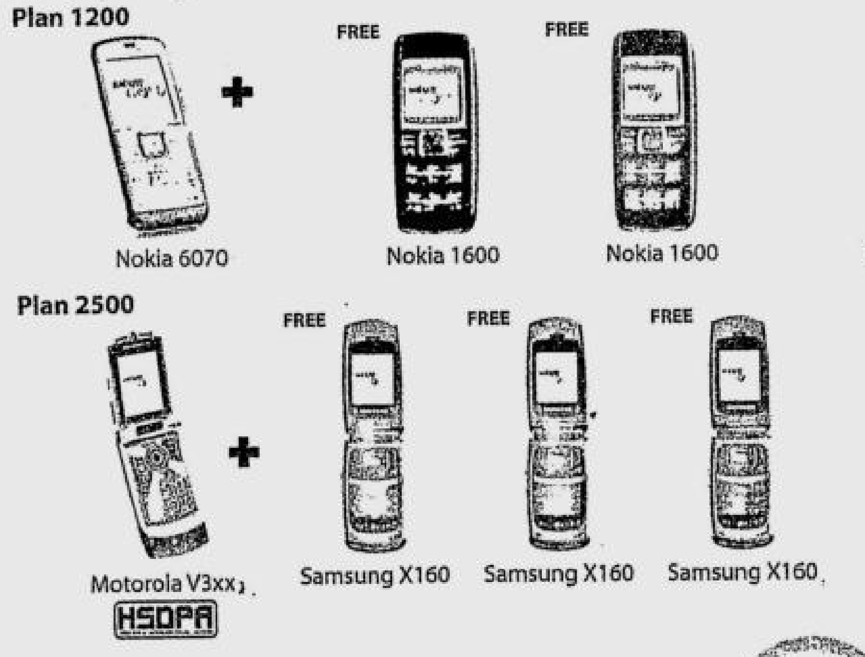
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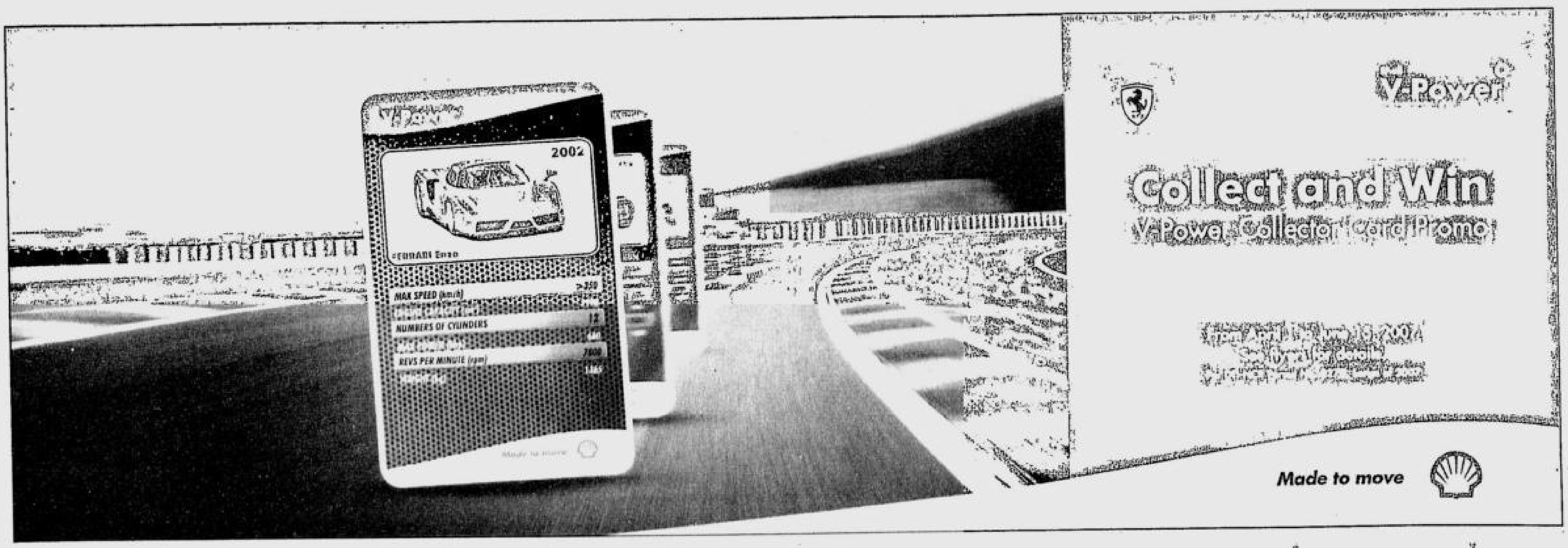
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Seven candidates in Metro ask for police protection

Threats prompted request, say bets

By Alcuin Papa

CITING THREATS TO THEIR LIVES, seven political candidates in Metro Manila have asked for additional security from the police.

A document from the National Capital Region Police Office identified the seven as Makati City Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado, who is running for reelection; Pasig City Councilor Roberto Eusebio who wants to succeed his father, Vicente, as city mayor; Malabon-Navotas Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval who is running for Navotas mayor; Alvin Sandoval, Ricky's brother, who wants to replace him in the House of Representatives; Muntinlupa City Vice Mayor Aldrin San Pedro, who is running for city mayor, Pasay City Mayor Allan Panaligan and his predecessor, Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad, who was suspended and then dismissed from government service.

Panaligan is running for congressman while Trinidad wants to reclaim his former post.

The two were locked in a fierce struggle last year for the city's top post after Trinidad was suspended by the Ombudsman and later permanently disbarred from government service over graft charges.

Panaligan was subsequently sworn in last January as Pasay mayor on a permanent basis by the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Like Panaligan and Trinidad, Eusebio's father, incumbent Mayor Vicente Eusebio, is also asking for more bodyguards although he is not running in the May 14 elections.

Interestingly enough, Roberto Eusebio's fiercest rival for the post, Rep. Roberto "Dodot" Jaworski Jr., was not in the list. Jaworski figured in the news last December after a bomb went off in his vehicle.

Although his car was destroyed, none of the occupants, which included the congressman, his brother Ryan and a bodyguard, was hurt.

Mercado, the younger Eusebio and Panaligan have asked for six more policemen for their protection. Eusebio's father wanted five while the two Sandovals requested four police bodyguards each.

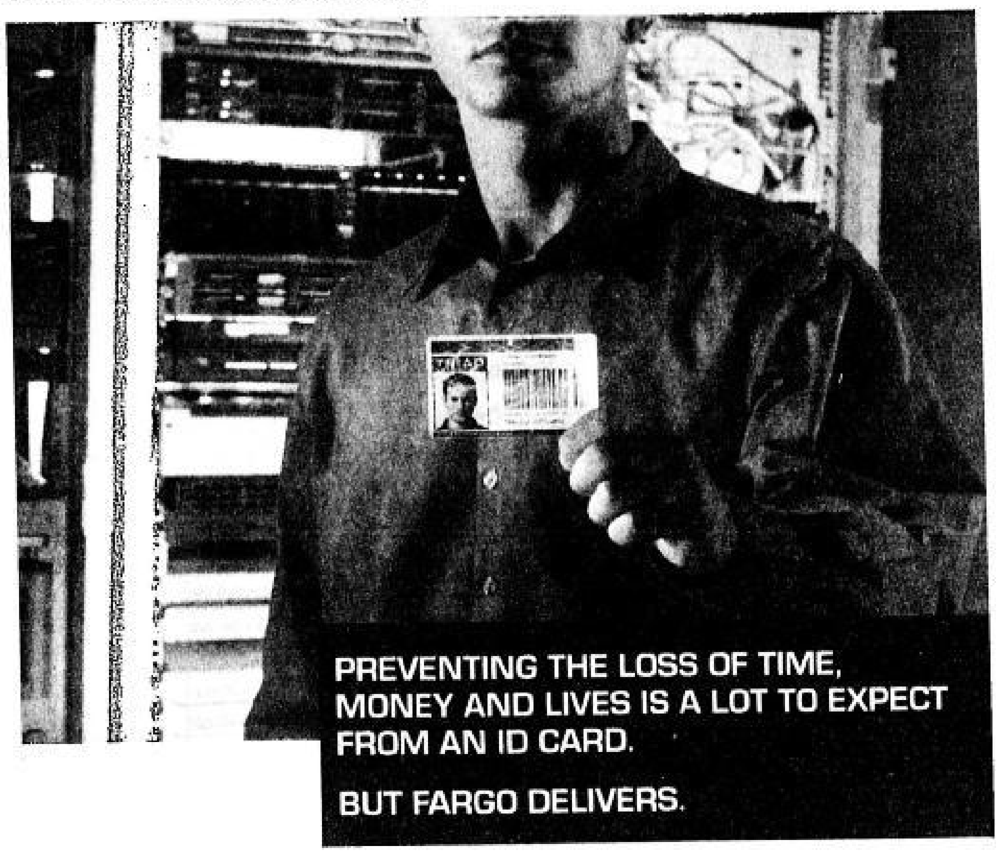
Mercado turned in his application last February 16 while the rest submitted their requests on different dates in March.

Police officials earlier said politicians would only be allowed a maximum of four policemen for security depending on assessments made on alleged threats to their lives.

DID YOU KNOW

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System was created in 1936 to provide social security benefits to government employees. The benefit package includes life insurance, retirement benefits, disability benefits for work-related accidents and death benefits. Active members are also entitled to salary, emergency, policy and housing loans. The GSIS head office is along Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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Hotel may face raps for denying guest's family room entry

By Kristine L. Alave

THE FAMILY OF A WOMAN WHO tried to kill herself inside a hotel room in Pasig City yesterday said they would file charges against the establishment for refusing them entry to the victim's room when they tried to save her.

Elaine Songsong, sister of victim Sheryll Teppang, 32, and a resident of New Intramuros Village in Quezon City, accused the management of The Richmonde Hotel Manila in Ortigas Center, Pasig City, of giving them the wrong room number and rejecting their initial pleas to see their sister, who had checked in at the hotel Monday morning.

"We are filing charges against Richmonde," Songsong said, adding that the management "fooled" them into thinking that Teppang was in another room. "We were talking about my sister's life here," she explained in an interview at the Pasig City police station.

According to Songsong, they even showed hotel manager John Galang text messages from Teppang who was reportedly under mental stress and had threatened to kill herself inside her hotel room.

"*Sinabi ko sa inyo na magpapakamatay ako! Wala na akong pamilya* (I told you that I would kill myself. I have no family anymore)," Teppang's text messages to her family read.

Songsong said that before Teppang checked into the hotel, the latter and her husband, Genaro, had a "small misunderstanding." She added her sister was also under a lot of stress from traveling abroad and taking care of their four children. Songsong said she decided to go to the hotel because she was concerned when she received Tappang's text messages.

But she added that when she and other family members arrived at the hotel at 1:30 p.m., Galang refused to let them inside the victim's room for "privacy" reasons. However, when she told him that Teppang might have a gun, Galang brought them to room 1418. "It was a clean room. There was no one there," Songsong said.

In another text message early in the evening, Songsong said they received another message from Teppang indicating that she could still be in the hotel. She said they tried to call Galang, only to be told that she had already left. The night duty manager, Karen Arcilla, however, checked the room assigned to Teppang right after she received the call. Arcilla then called up Songsong and told her they had found her sister unconscious in Room 1611, with a telephone cord around her neck.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Galang for comment but his staff at the hotel said he was on leave.

There were no other representatives in the hotel who could comment on the case, a staff member said.

POOL IS COOL

Just as there are many ways to skin a cat, there are also many ways to beat the heat. For these children, it's swimming in a portable pool right on the street.

REUTERS

Motorcycle rider shot dead in QC

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A 29-YEAR-OLD MOTORCYCLE rider died before dawn yesterday when he was shot in the head with an improvised shotgun by an unidentified man in Quezon City.

Reynold Mendoza, of 79 Mutya Street in Barangay Payatas-B, was killed instantly while his brothers-in-law, who were also on board the motorcycle, were not hurt.

Reports from the Quezon City Police District Payatas Station 6-B said the incident happened at around 1:30 a.m. on Sto. Niño Street in Barangay Payatas-B.

SPO2 Armand Solitario, case investigator, said that before the incident, Mendoza got on a motorcycle with his brothers-in-law, Raymond Falip and Harnson Magindra. He was seated between the two men.

As they cruised on the street, the motorcycle slowed down as it reached a hump in the road. At this point, a man approached them and shot Mendoza in the head, according to his brothers-in-law. The gunman then fled.

Police, however, are wondering why none of the shotgun pellets hit any of the two men riding with Mendoza when he was apparently shot at close range.

PNP doc 'corrects' Velasco statement

By DJ Yap

THE MEDICO-LEGAL OFFICER who testified in the bail hearing of former Batangas Gov. Jose Antonio Leviste yesterday objected to statements attributed to him by Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco.

"I never said it was physically impossible for the victim to still be able to hold a gun after a '*pangingisay*' or cadaveric spasm," Dr. Voltaire Nulud told the INQUIRER. "It's also not true that all victims of a shooting undergo cadaveric spasms," added the doctor, who works for the Philippine National Police.

Velasco told the court Monday that according to Nulud, a victim of a shooting always undergoes spasms because of pain signals sent to the brain.

Velasco concluded that Rafael de las Alas would have experienced multiple pain signals, making it "physically impossible for him to still be able to hold a gun."

Leviste has been charged with murdering De las Alas, his longtime aide. The former governor, however, told the police that he merely acted in self-defense when he shot the victim inside his office in Makati City on Jan. 12.

Velasco had argued that the gun found in De las Alas' hand at the time he was killed had been planted. But Nulud clarified that what he told the court was actually the "opposite" of what Velasco quoted him as saying.

"It's true that some victims of a shooting undergo cadaveric spasm because of pain signals sent to the brain, but not all," he said. He also denied Velasco's statement that it would have been impossible for De las Alas to be holding a gun after undergoing spasms. "In fact, it's very possible he would be holding the gun in a tight grip, and it would be difficult for anyone to remove it from his grasp," Nulud said.

According to the doctor, he was not siding with anyone, but just wanted to clarify the facts because his colleagues might question his competence "Although I testified for the government, I'm neutral. I just said what I saw," he added.

Nulud's testimony was part of the just concluded bail hearing with Judge Elmo Alameda of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 on the motion to deny or grant bail to Leviste.

Velasco, however, said the impossibility of De las Alas' holding a gun after undergoing a spasm was his own conclusion, not Nulud's.

SAFE NOW

Ten-year-old Okoy Morillo carries his puppies to safety inside a box after his house at the Floating Village in Parañaque City was demolished. Morillo's family was among 47 others who were relocated from the area to give way to the construction of the new Nayong Pilipino park.

REM ZAMORA

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion and Development Authority

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE EXECUTION OF A MARKETING COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN FOR SCTEx

1. The *Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA)*, through its 2007 Corporate Budget intends to apply the sum of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *Consulting Services for the Execution of a Marketing Communication Campaign for SCTEx*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.
2. The *BCDA* now calls for the submission of *Letters of Intent (LOIs)* from potential bidders to apply for eligibility for the bidding for consulting services for the aforecited project. *Interested bidders must submit their LOIs during the issuance date of Eligibility Documents on April 26 to May 4, 2007 only and obtain the Application for Eligibility and to Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) at the Bases Conversion and Development Authority Corporate Center, 2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.* Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. A *Pre-eligibility conference will be held on Monday, May 7, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.*
3. The deadline for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on *May 16, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. and the Opening of the Eligibility Documents will follow at 9:30 a.m. at the Bases Conversion and Development Authority Corporate Center, 2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.* Late submission of Eligibility Documents shall be accepted only for recording purposes but will not be considered and will be returned unopened. Only those bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.
4. The Pre-bid conference for those who will qualify to participate in the bidding will be held on June 4, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. Only those who will attend the pre-bid conference will be allowed to participate in the bidding.
5. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184, only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded based on the Quality-Cost Base Evaluation with an 80% rating for the Technical Proposal and 20% rating for the Cost Proposal determined during post-qualification. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon presentation of the Notice of eligibility to the SBAC Secretariat, at the address given below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m on May 25-31, 2007.
7. *BCDA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on Monday, June 4, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Bases Conversion and Development Authority Corporate Center, 2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address given below on or before 1:00 p.m., Friday, June 22, 2007. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following form:*
   - a. *Cash, Manager's Check, Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or Bank draft – one percent (1%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract.*
   - b. *Bank Guarantee – one and one half percent (1 ½ %) of the Approved Budget for the Contract.*
   - c. *Surety Bond from a reputable insurance company accredited by the Insurance Commission – two and a half percent (2 ½%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract.*

Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on 1:30 p.m., Friday, June 22, 2007 at the Bases Conversion and Development Authority Corporate Center, 2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address given below on the same date.

8. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from BCDA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on April 26 to May 4, 2007:

Ms. Nancy Paje
SBAC Secretariat
Bases Conversion and Development Authority
2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center,
Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig 1634
Tel/Fax No. 816-6666 loc. 122
Email address: nvpaje@bcda.gov.ph
Website: www.bcda.gov.ph

9. The *Bases Conversion and Development Authority* reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) Victor V. Zablan
SBAC Chairman

(PDI – April 25 & May 2, 2007)

Nicknames may mean a lot in polls

By Allison W. Lopez

ELEKSYON 2007

WHAT'S IN A NICKNAME?

A lot, apparently—especially since a nickname can help in name recall that may translate into actual votes during elections.

"Candidates are free to choose the nicknames they want; these do not necessarily have to be unique. But it's important that they use the nickname they go by in their community," said lawyer Michael Dioneda, acting director of the Commission on Elections' National Capital Region office.

A look at the certified list of candidates running in the May 14 elections in Manila shows many apparently believe that having a nickname can be an advantage.

Maria Teresita "Maria Jimenez" Crespo Alsua, who is running for mayor, goes by the initials "MJ," banking on the popularity of her brother, former Rep. Mark Jimenez, who was the first to use the tag before his sister adopted it.

Her rivals for the post also use nicknames to make their real names not only shorter but more "public-friendly." Arnold Atienza wants to be known as "Ali," Rodolfo Bacani is "Rudy," Alfredo Lim is "Fred" while Danilo Lacuna is "Danny."

For entertainment personalities who want to get elected into public office, the use of their "reel" instead of their real name may give them an edge over other candidates.

For instance, only a few people would vote for Luciano Marinas Veloso, Roberto G. Reyes and John Marvin Cruz Nieto who are all running for councilor.

More voters, however, would probably throw their support behind Veloso, Reyes and Nieto if they knew the three are known in the movie industry as Lou Veloso, Amay Bisaya and Yul Servo, respectively. Francisco Moreno Domagoso also kept his screen name "Isko Moreno" in his bid for vice mayor, but independent candidate Cita Astals, may upstage him by using the outrageous tag she has been known for: "Babaeng Walang Balakang," loosely translated as "Woman with no hips."

Dioneda, however, warned that nicknames may be used to sow confusion since these alone can stand in the ballots and be counted as votes.

METROBRIEFS

New police chief

NAVOTAS has a new police chief. Supt. Eric Reyes replaced Supt. Genesis Tolejano over the weekend after an order for his appointment, with the approval of the Commission on Elections, was issued on Friday by the police leadership. Although surprised by his appointment, Reyes promised to take a neutral stance on local politics and to ensure the safe conduct of the May 14 elections in the municipality. "I was surprised by my assignment but I promise to implement the law equally and to maintain peace and order," he told the INQUIRER. Reyes was the Southern Police District's deputy for operations before his assignment to Navotas. Mayor Toby Tiangco, meanwhile, told the INQUIRER that he was not informed of Reyes' appointment until the turnover ceremony last Saturday. "I welcome the new police chief and expect him to be professional," he said.

Nancy C. Carvajal

DPWH workers discover old bombs in QC

By Jeannette I. Andrade

SEVEN VINTAGE BOMBS AND AN old Japanese military hand grenade were dug up on Monday afternoon by workers of the Department of Public Works and Highways doing road repair work near Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City.

Bomb Disposal Unit head Insp. Arnulfo Franco said the World War II explosive devices could have destroyed most of the houses on Valencia Street in Barangay Valencia had the workers accidentally touched any of the bombs with their equipment.

"*Malaking* damage *iyon kung aksidenteng tinamaan ng piko o pala kahit isa sa mga bomba* (It would have caused massive damage if any of the bombs were accidentally hit by a pick or shovel)," Franco told the INQUIRER.

He pointed out that although the vintage bombs are several decades old, these still contain highly explosive chemicals that could explode when struck. "*Mabuti na lang, hindi napukpok ng mga trabahador* (It's a good thing they were not hit by the workers)," the bomb disposal unit chief remarked.

Franco said the seven 81-mm mortar bombs and the Japanese hand grenade were discovered by DPWH workers at around 4:15 p.m., Monday, in front of 76 Valencia Street. Fortunately, the construction workers knew what to do and immediately called in bomb experts to handle and dispose of the bombs properly, he said.

The vintage bombs have all been dismantled and are now in their safekeeping.

According to Franco, they have been conducting training programs and an information drive to make Quezon City residents aware of what they should do in case a bomb or a suspicious package is discovered, or if they receive a bomb threat over the phone.

"We conduct seminars regularly to prevent injuries and deaths from accidental blasts," he said, adding that they recently visited the Manila Water Co. and taught its pipeline maintenance workers how to deal with the discovery of vintage bombs in their road excavation projects.

Apart from companies conducting road diggings, Franco said they have also been coordinating with bus companies and mall security personnel to teach them how to identify and handle suspicious packages and what to do in case of bomb threats.

WORLDBRIEFS

Terror trial in Australia

SYDNEY—Nine men who allegedly stockpiled bomb-making chemicals and vowed to avenge perceived injustices against Muslims were ordered to stand trial for Australia's largest terrorist conspiracy, court officials said on Tuesday. The nine men are each charged with conspiring between June 2004 and November 2005 to carry out a terrorist act. None of the suspects, who face a maximum penalty of life in prison if convicted, entered a plea, but their lawyers have said they maintain they are innocent. Prosecutors said the nine suspects bought unrestricted chemicals that can be used in making explosives. *AP*

Sunni bloc threatens to quit

BAGHDAD—The largest bloc of Sunni Arabs in the Iraqi parliament threatened to withdraw its ministers from the Shiite-dominated cabinet on Tuesday in frustration over the Iraq government's failure to deal with Sunni concerns. President Bush stepped in to forestall the move, calling one of Iraq's two vice presidents, Tariq al-Hashimi, a Sunni Arab, and inviting him to Washington, according to al-Hashimi's office and the White House. The bloc, known as the Iraqi Consensus Front and made up of three Sunni Arab parties, "has lost hope in rectifying the situation despite all of its sincere and serious efforts to do so," the statement said. *NYT*

British bomb plotters get life

LONDON—A judge handed down life jail terms on Monday to five men convicted of plotting an al-Qaida-linked bombing campaign in Britain, including one with links to the ringleader of the 2005 attacks in London. Judge Michael Astill said the men were intent on causing "indiscriminate death and suffering" as he sentenced them at London's Central Criminal Court to a minimum of between 35 and 40 years behind bars. The five were convicted of conspiring to bomb a central London nightclub and shopping center, bring down a plane as well as hit gas and electricity supplies, to commit what Clarke said was "mass murder" in the process. *AFP*

Poor countries want voice on climate change

BANGKOK—AS CLIMATE CHANGE EXperts meet in Bangkok, poor nations suffering the brunt of global warming's worst effects are determined their voices will not be drowned out by bickering world powers.

Impoverished countries, struggling with a lack of money, basic technology, large populations and weak infrastructure, have few tools to tackle climate change or halt its impact on their environment.

That will not stop them demanding a say as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN's leading body on global warming, meets here to hammer out a plan to limit the worst impacts of global warming.

"Developing countries are innocent as far as emissions causing the climate change, but unfortunately seem to be recipients of undesirable outcomes," Rwandan delegate Didace Musoni said.

"My input is equally important. We need each other to solve this problem which threatens all of us," he told AFP on the first day of the IPCC meeting, which runs to Friday.

An IPCC report in April warned that drought, floods and storms will increase as global temperatures rise, putting the health of millions at risk.

The poorest counties will be hardest hit, it said, despite being largely guilt-free when it comes to carbon dioxide emissions.

In 2004, just 20 percent of people on Earth lived in rich countries, but IPCC figures showed they were responsible for 46 percent of all the greenhouse gasses spewed into the atmosphere that year.

It is the rich and fast-developing nations that are predicted to dominate the Bangkok session, with heavy polluters China and the United States expected to lock horns with nations keen for a more eco-friendly approach.

A report is expected to be released at the end of the meeting. An early draft of the panel's 24-page summary, seen by AFP, says that greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced at modest cost, with renewable energy, nuclear power, reforestation and a carbon tax all possible solutions.

Abigail Gay Jabines, climate campaigner for environmental group Greenpeace, said poor nations should focus on renewable energy such as solar and wind power and bypass the "dirty" energy phase that rich countries went through.

"It's something that these countries can do without following the footsteps of the industrialized nations and releasing millions of tons of carbon dioxide," she said.

However, some countries are finding they have little choice but to turn to more polluting methods to supply the ever-increasing demand for power. *AFP*

Prince Harry to be sent to Iraq

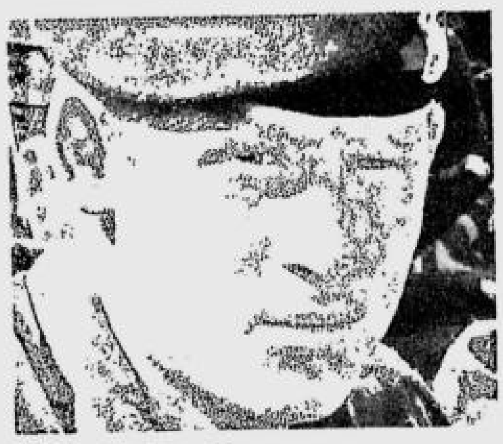
LONDON—PRINCE HARRY WILL SERVE IN Iraq with his regiment, the head of the British Army said on Monday, despite fears that insurgents could target the third in line to the throne.

"I have taken the decision as chief of general staff. It's my decision as chief of general staff. I have full command of everyone in the Army, including Prince Harry," Gen. Sir Richard Dannatt said in a statement.

Dannatt said the decision had been taken after the "widest possible consultation" but added that he could yet change his mind if circumstances changed.

"I will of course keep that decision continually under review and if circumstances are such that I change that decision, I will make a further statement," he told Sky News.

Speculation has been rife about Harry's deployment with the Blues and Royals regiment since the decision to send him was announced in February. The regiment was expected to begin its six-month tour of duty in May.



BRITAIN'S Prince Harry REUTERS

British media have said the 22-year-old second lieutenant—or Cornet Wales as he is known in the Blues and Royals—could be pulled from the front line because of the threat of kidnap or death and his presence could put comrades in extra danger. *AFP*

American newspaper circulation in steep slide

NEWSPAPER SALES CONTINUE a steep slide nationally, figures released on Monday show, but two New York City tabloids continued to buck the trend, posting the largest gains among major papers.

The industry as a whole reported a 2.1 percent drop in weekday circulation, and 3.1 percent on Sundays, in the six months ended March 31, compared with the period a year earlier. The figures, compiled by the Audit Bureau of Circulation but not yet audited, reflect 745 of the nation's more than 1,400 daily newspapers. The figures follow first-quarter reports for the nation's major newspaper companies that showed falling earnings, declines in advertising and plans for continued staff cuts, heightening fears about the future of newspapers.

Circulation figures have dropped steadily but gradually for two decades, beginning in the 1980s, but since 2004, the decline has picked up speed as readers and advertisers have migrated to the Internet.

But The New York Post, and its rival, The Daily News, defied the industry's gravity. Circulation at The Post jumped 7.6 percent on weekdays and 6.2 percent on Sundays, and at The News it rose 1.4 percent on weekdays, but slipped 2.5 percent on Sundays. *New York Times News Service*

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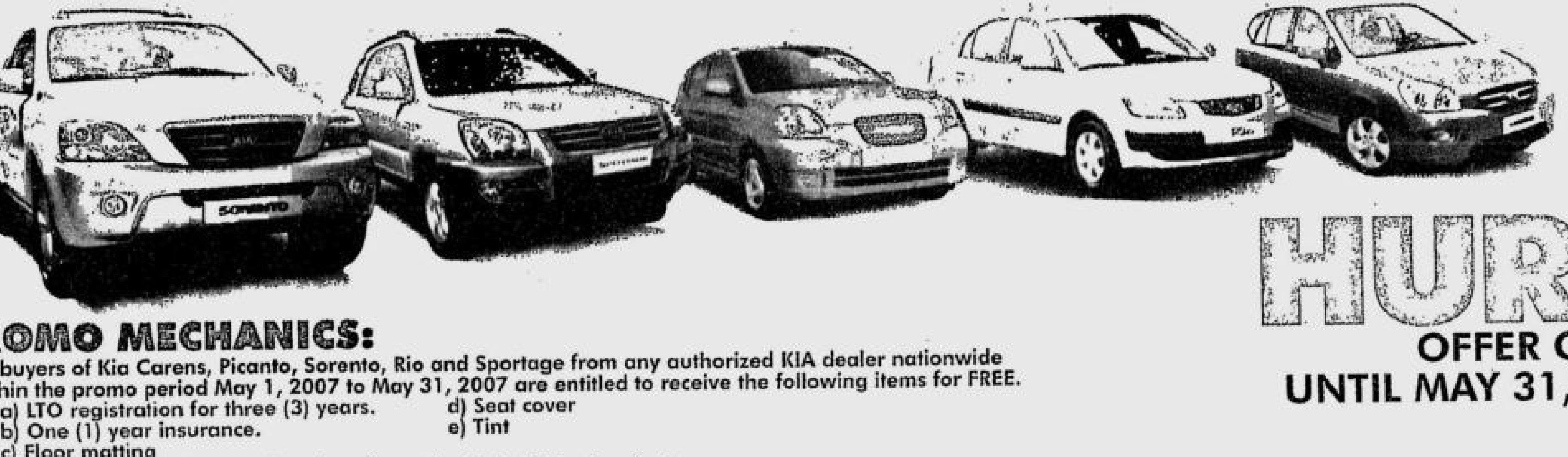

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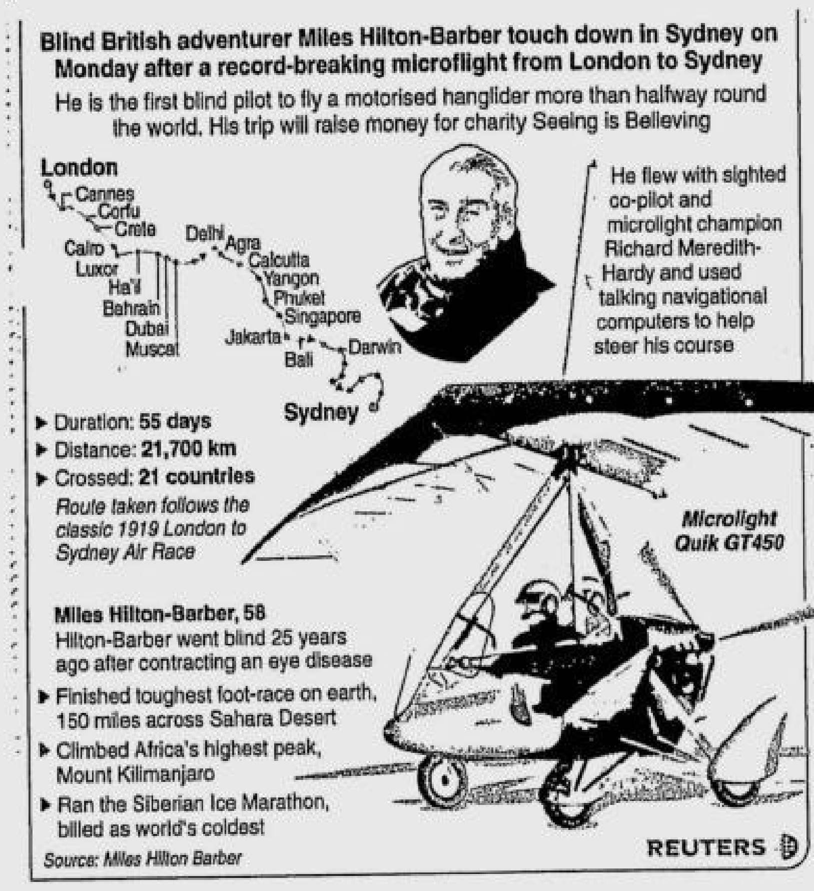
The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**



Blind British adventurer Miles Hilton-Barber touch down in Sydney on Monday after a record-breaking microflight from London to Sydney

He is the first blind pilot to fly a motorised hanglider more than halfway round the world. His trip will raise money for charity Seeing is Believing

London
Cannes
Corfu
Crete
Cairo
Luxor
Ha'il
Bahrain
Dubai
Muscat
Delhi
Agra
Calcutta
Yangon
Phuket
Singapore
Jakarta
Bali
Darwin
Sydney
He flew with sighted co-pilot and microlight champion Richard Meredith-Hardy and used talking navigational computers to help steer his course
Microlight Quik GT450

- Duration: **55 days**
- Distance: **21,700 km**
- Crossed: **21 countries**

Route taken follows the classic 1919 London to Sydney Air Race

Miles Hilton-Barber, 58
Hilton-Barber went blind 25 years ago after contracting an eye disease

- Finished toughest foot-race on earth, 150 miles across Sahara Desert
- Climbed Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro
- Ran the Siberian Ice Marathon, billed as world's coldest

Source: Miles Hilton Barber

REUTERS

Blind British pilot flies halfway around the world

SYDNEY—A BLIND BRITISH ADVENTURER landed in Sydney on Monday completing a record-breaking journey that took him halfway around the world in a microlight aircraft.

Miles Hilton-Barber left London on March 7 and flew more than 21,000-km to raise funds to fight blindness in developing countries.

"It's the fulfillment of an amazing dream," the 58-year-old adventurer said after touching down at Sydney's Bankstown airport. "I've been wanting to do this flight for about four years." Hilton-Barber flies with a sighted co-pilot but relies on speech output from his navigation instruments to steer his course, directing the plane from a wireless keyboard.

"I've wanted to be a pilot since I was a kid. Now I'm totally blind and I've had the privilege of flying more than halfway around the world. The big deal is not me doing this, it's raising funds," he said.

"I'll never see again in this lifetime, but if they can see through this flight it's been more than worthwhile," the adventurer, whose feat makes him the first blind pilot to fly half-way across the world, added.

Hilton-Barber, who has been blind for 25 years, hopes the trip will raise some $2 million for the charity Seeing is Believing, which works to cut the incidence of preventable blindness in developing countries.

In 1999 the adventurer completed the "Toughest Foot-race on Earth"—250 km across the Sahara Desert—before running in the "Coldest Marathon on Earth," the Siberian Ice Marathon.

He has climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Blanc, Africa and Europe's highest mountains, and set the Malaysian Grand Prix lap record for a blind driver in a 200 kph Lotus.

On his arrival in Darwin in northern Australia last week, Hilton-Barber described the sensation of flying his aircraft.

"It's a very primitive form of flying but for a blind man it's wonderful because it is very sensual," he said. *AFP*

Terrorism deaths surge 40%

WASHINGTON—THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE killed by terrorism around the world surged by 40 percent to more than 20,000 last year largely because of greater violence in Iraq and Afghanistan, a US report said on Monday.

Global terrorism fatalities rose to 20,498 in 2006 from 14,618 in 2005 with the vast majority in Iraq, according to the US State Department's annual "Country Reports on Terrorism" publication.

The number killed by terrorism in Iraq rose to 13,340 from 8,262 in 2005, Russ Travers, an official with the US National Counterterrorism Center that compiled the figures for the State Department, told reporters.

In the latest incident, a suicide bomber wearing a vest packed with explosives killed 32 people when he blew himself up among mourners at a Shiite funeral in the town of Khalis in volatile Diyala province north of Baghdad, Iraqi police said.

Since US and Iraqi forces launched a security crackdown in Baghdad in February, militants including Sunni Islamist al-Qaida have increasingly staged attacks outside the capital.

The State Department said the number of such incidents worldwide rose to 14,338 last year from 11,153 in 2005.

Of these, attacks in Iraq nearly doubled to 6,630 from 3,468 in 2005 and represented about 45 percent of the total.

The report described Iraq as at the center of the US "war on terror," with coalition forces battling al-Qaida in Iraq and insurgents as well as "militias and death squads increasingly engaged in sectarian violence and criminal organizations taking advantage of Iraq's deteriorating security situation." The number of attacks also jumped to 749 from 491 in Afghanistan, where US, Nato and other forces are fighting a revived Taliban insurgency more than five years after US-led forces toppled the Taliban regime that harbored al-Qaida.

The number killed in these incidents in Afghanistan was 1,040 last year, up from 684 in 2005, Travers said.

The numbers, which are based on "open sources" or public information, were compiled by the National Counterterrorism Center and included in a State Department report that assesses such violence around the world. *Reuters*

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0570 Series of 2007

SEX SCANDALS

Who's on Madam's list?

WASHINGTON—THE WOMAN WHO faces charges of running a prostitution ring in Washington that serviced the prominent and powerful said on Monday that she intended to force many of those clients to testify in her behalf.

Deborah Jeane Palfrey is offering a simple defense to government charges that the escort service she ran for 13 years by telephone from her home in California was actually a straightforward prostitution business.

Although she promoted her business as a legal "high-end erotic fantasy service," she said it was not intended as an exchange of sex for money. She told reporters on Monday that her former clients, reported to include a Bush administration economics official and the head of a conservative research group, among others, should confirm that when they are called to testify.

Washington residents have been mildly titillated by the case but more than mildly curious about the one obvious question: Who were those powerful clients?

As for now, the names of only two have been revealed. The most prominent was Randall L. Tobias, a veteran businessman and the top foreign aid adviser in the State Department, who resigned Friday after he acknowledged to ABC News that he was on the list of Palfrey's clients.

The other, disclosed on Palfrey's website, was Harlan K. Ullman, a Defense Department consultant best known for coining the phrase "shock and awe" to describe the intended effect on Iraq of the war's opening barrage, but the phrase also might well describe his own reaction to being called by reporters on Friday about the disclosure, to which he declined comment.

ABC has used the information to prepare a story to be broadcast this Friday on its show "20/20." In a tease for the segment, ABC said on its website on Monday that the list includes, "a Bush administration economist, the head of a conservative think tank, a prominent CEO, several lobbyists and a handful of military officials" in addition to Tobias and Ullman. The network did not identify the customers by name and a spokesperson declined to say whether it would do so Friday.

Tobias told reporters that he had used the escort service but said he only received massages. *New York Times News Service*

AL-MASRI AFP

Al-Qaida leader in Iraq killed

BAGHDAD—THE LEADER OF al-Qaida in Iraq, Abu Ayyub al-Masri, was killed on Tuesday in an internal fight between insurgents north of Baghdad, the Interior Ministry spokesperson said.

Brig. Gen. Abdul Kareem Khalaf told Reuters "we have definite intelligence reports that al Masri was killed today."

Another source in the ministry also said Masri had been killed. Khalaf said the battle happened near a bridge in the small town of al-Nibayi, north of Baghdad.

Both Khalaf and the other source in the ministry said the authorities did not have Masri's body.

The US military said it could not confirm the reports.

"I hope that it is true, but we want to be very careful to make sure," said Lt. Col. Christopher Garver, a spokesperson for the US military in Iraq.

There has been increasing friction between Sunni Islamist al-Qaida and other Sunni Arab insurgent groups, particularly over al-Qaida's indiscriminate killing of civilians in Iraq.

Masri, who is also known as Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, assumed the leadership of al-Qaida in Iraq after Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was killed in a US air strike in June 2006.

US and Iraqi officials accuse al-Qaida of trying to tip Iraq into full-scale civil war between Iraq's majority Shiites and minority Sunni Arabs with a campaign of spectacular car bombs attacks that have killed thousands.

Iraqi officials also blame al-Qaida for destroying a holy Shiite shrine in Samarra a year ago, an act that unleashed a surge in sectarian bloodletting.

The US military commander in Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus, said last week that al-Qaida was now "probably public enemy number one" in Iraq.

Masri, an Egyptian, has been described by the US military as a former close Zarqawi associate who trained in Afghanistan and formed al-Qaida's first cell in Baghdad.

The United States has a $5 million bounty on Masri's head. *Reuters*

WB chief hits critics, won't resign

WASHINGTON—WORLD BANK President Paul Wolfowitz lashed back at critics on Monday who he said were conducting a smear campaign against him and vowed he would not resign.

In a statement to a bank panel looking into whether he broke ethical and other rules in a pay-and-promotion deal he directed for his girlfriend, Wolfowitz said treatment of the issue had become "circus like."

"The goal of this smear campaign, I believe, is to create a self-fulfilling prophecy that I am an ineffective leader and must step down for that reason alone, even if the ethics charges are unwarranted," Wolfowitz said.

"And, I will not resign in the face of a plainly bogus charge of conflict of interest," he said in the statement.

The former deputy US defense secretary, whose legacy as an architect of the Iraq war has dogged his tenure at the bank, did not rule out the possibility he may eventually step down, but made clear he would not be forced.

"Only when the cloud of these unfair and untrue charges is removed, will it truly be possible to determine objectively whether I can be an effective leader of the World Bank," Wolfowitz said.

Sources said the meeting with the seven-member panel, led by Dutch director Herman Wijffels, lasted about two hours, and focused on conflict of interest issues over the promotion for Shaha Riza, an Oxford-educated Middle East specialist.

Riza also met the panel on Monday, where she described her personal aguish over the controversy that she said had now harmed the bank.

In a statement, obtained by Reuters, Riza said she felt under attack by a "powerful group" of bank managers who wanted her out because of her relationship with Wolfowitz.

Riza said she could not understand why she was singled out for such treatment when in 2005 the bank's then-Managing Director Shengman Zhang's wife, Lingzhi Xu, also worked at bank, and, previously, so did Maritta Koch-Weser, the wife of former managing director Caio Koch-Weser.

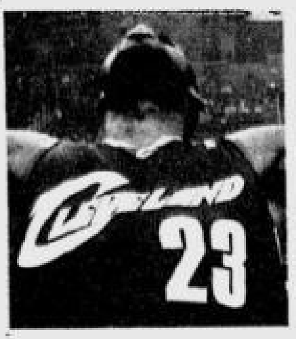
At a news conference in the White House Rose Garden, US President George W. Bush reiterated his support for Wolfowitz.

"I think he ought to stay. He ought to be given a fair hearing," Bush told reporters.

The controversy has prompted calls by bank staff for Wolfowitz's resignation. Staff at the forefront of implementing the bank's anti-corruption strategy last week said their work had been undermined by the crisis.

Exactly how the bank's 24-nation board will proceed was unclear, with board sources close to the decision-making process saying directors would now need to reach a resolution among themselves on how to proceed.

The directors, who approve the appointment of the head of the bank, have the authority to remove him from office. *Reuters*



WHAT'S INSIDE

Cavs put an end to Wizards' misery /A29

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Jong, Gin Kings stake win streak vs Dragons

JONG UICHICO JUST DOESN'T SEEM CAPABLE of doing anything wrong these past few weeks.

The coach has turned what seemed like insurmountable odds in his favor for most of the PBA Fiesta Cup. His undermanned Barangay Ginebra side continued to hold sway and his North team prevailed in the All-Star Game in Baguio City despite being down by 22 points at one time.

And that is one formidable streak that Welcoat will have to overcome when the Dragons try to snap a four-game Ginebra winning run as the eliminations resume at the Araneta Coliseum.

Welcoat, in fact, has armed itself going into the 4:35 p.m. game, enlisting the services of former University of New Mexico Lobos mainstay Wayland White to take the place of the high-leaping—but disappointing—Rob Sanders.

The Dragons have lost their last five games, no thanks to a freak injury that befell original import Charles Clark and the subsequent arrival of Sanders who proved to be nothing but hype.

Incidentally, White will be the first of two imports making their debuts tonight, the second being Jamaal Williams of Sta. Lucia Realty, which slugs it out with Air21 in the 7:20 p.m. contest.

Williams replaces Rock Winston, a hard-working but undersized import who could do no better than lead the Realtors to just three wins in their first 10 games.

Listed as a 6-foot-5 forward whom Washington State coach Lorenzo Romar said "plays about three inches taller than his height," Williams will be playing his first commercial stint in the Philippines.

And he will have a lot of hole-plugging to do, with the Realtors seemingly in tatters despite a solid lineup.

But the focus for the night will still be on Uichico, who has whipped his Ginebra team into a solid title threat even without Jay-Jay Helterbrand and Mark Caguioa who are on loan to the National Team and four other key men who are in the injury list.

Uichico worked his magic on Sunday, steering the North to a 145-142 decision of the South even after being down by as many as 22 points early in the second period.

Rod Nealy will be more than a handful no matter how good White turns out to be.

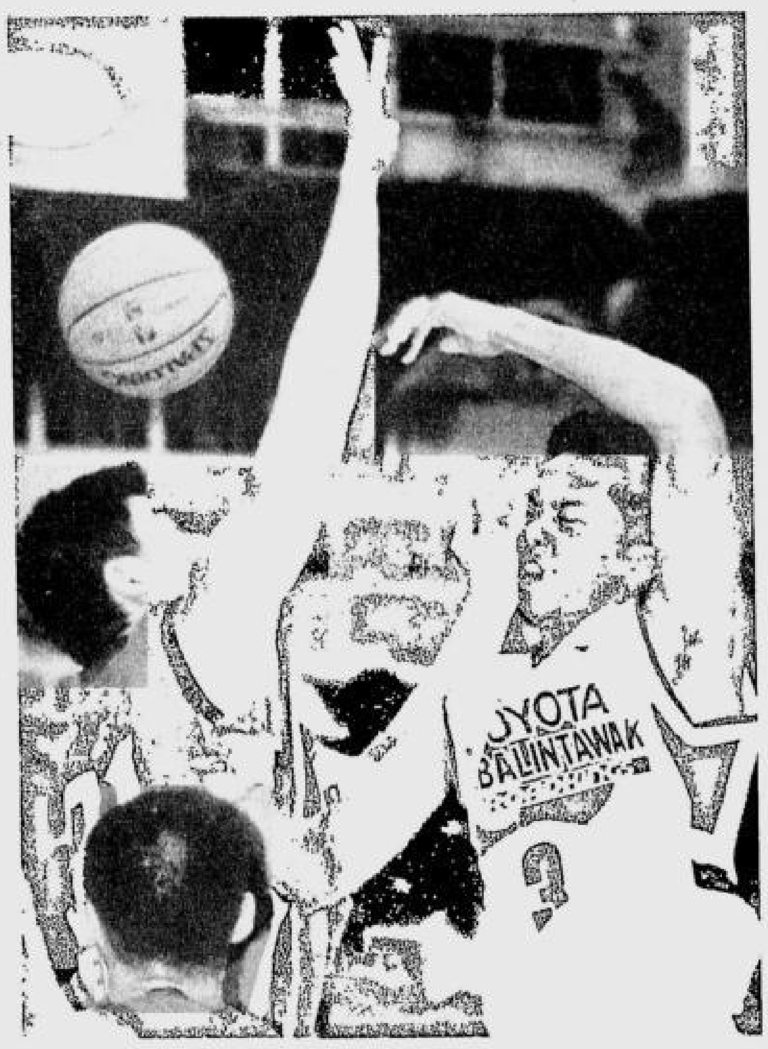
The left-handed Ginebra import churned out a triple double in the last Ginebra win, validating Nealy's stature as the best in the current crop of imports, Red Bull's James Penny notwithstanding.

Shawn Daniels, meanwhile, will carry the fight for the Express, who will be welcoming back Gary David and Niño Canaleta from their big stints in the All-Star week. *Musong R. Castillo*

STANDINGS	W	L
Ginebra	8	2
Red Bull	8	3
Air21	7	3
Alaska	7	4
Talk 'N Text	6	5
San Miguel	4	6
Purefoods	4	7
Coca-Cola	4	7
Sta. Lucia	3	7
Welcoat	2	8

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Welcoat vs Barangay Ginebra
7:20 p.m.—Air21 vs Sta. Lucia

Toyota gamble pays off; Harbour scores



MARCO Fajardo of Toyota Balintawak opts to pass against Rey Mendoza of Burger King during their game yesterday. ERIK ARAZAS

By Jasmine W. Payo

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK EMployed a risky strategy in trying to halt Burger King's four-game winning streak.

After an opening half clouded by doubt, the Road Kings watched the gamble pay off in the second half, where they pulled away to deal the Whoppers' their first loss in a blowout 82-66 decision in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the Olivarez College Sports Center in Parañaque City.

"We flirted with disaster," said coach Ariel Vanguardia after the Road Kings decided to clamp down on shooters Ronjay Buenafe and Mike Bravo rather than Burger King main man JR Quiñahan.

"We just let the ball go to Quiñahan to minimize the touches of Bravo and Buenafe. We were hoping that he'd tire out, and he did. Good thing it paid off."

Dennis Daa delivered a game-high 28 points and 13 rebounds to lead the Road Kings to their first back-to-back wins in the tournament.

Meanwhile, Harbour Centre joined Burger King on top at 4-1 as Jason Castro exploded in the last two periods to lift Batang Pier to an 84-81 overtime triumph versus Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala in the second game.

The defending champions opened the extra period with a 7-0 charge behind Castro, who posted another all-around effort of 17 points, nine rebounds, six assists and two steals.

Harbour, which survived a six-minute scoring drought in the second half, also spoiled Ken Bono's game-high 30 points and eight boards.

The Moneymen slid to 3-2 for a share of second place with the Road Kings.

"It was Castro again, as usual," said Harbour coach Jorge Gallent. "We lose that spurt, that energy when we're leading, but it goes up again when the game is on the line. We have to fix that."

The Moneymen climbed from a 16-point hole, 39-55, with Bono capping the rally with a low-post bucket that gave them a 72-70 advantage.

But a Castro drive knotted the contest at 72 in the last 20.7 seconds of regulation to forge the extra period.

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Olivarez College Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Henkel Sista vs Dazz 'Sang Patak
4 p.m.—Burger King vs San Miguel Magnolia

The scores:

First Game

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK 82—Daa 28, Rodriguez 13, Coronel 11, Cabahug 8, Cagoco 4, Dedicatoria 4, Baluyot 4, Fajardo 4, Nocom 2, Jaime 2, Guerrero 2, Alcaraz 0, Pradas 0, Tan 0.

BURGER KING 66—Quiñahan 18, Buenafe 10, Bravo 9, Urbiztondo 8, David 6, Viray 4, Del Rosario 4, Te 3, Mendoza 2, Saguindel 2, Ballesteros 0, Garrido 0, Aquino 0.

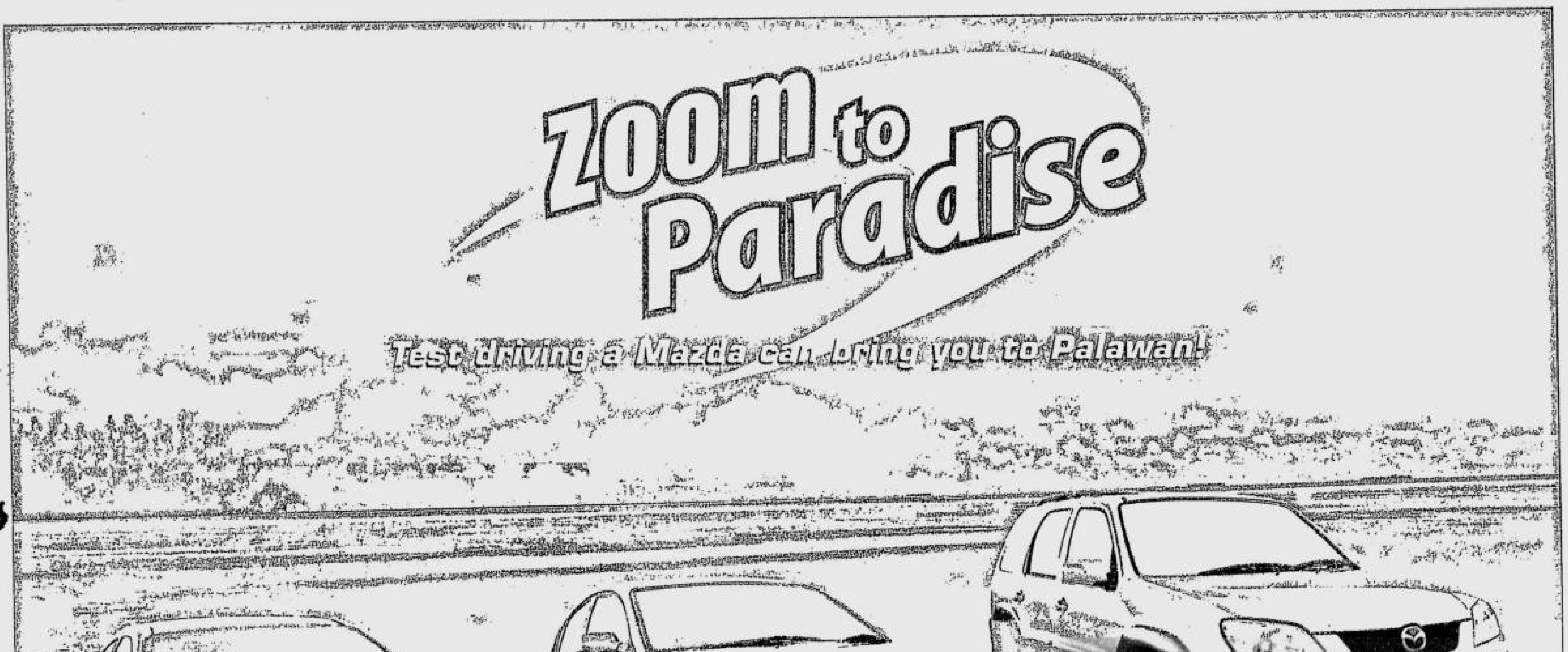
Quarters: 28-20, 45-40, 66-53, 82-66

Second Game

HARBOUR CENTRE 84—Castro 17, Araña 16, Intal 14, Lanete 12, Belga 8, Asoro 6, Vergara 5, Fernandez 3, Alonzo 2, Duncil 1, Capati 0, Gamboa 0, Ortiguerra 0.

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 81—Bono 30, Capus 12, Grijaldo 11, Dela Cuesta 8, Escalona 6, Dulay 6, Dela Peña 5, Kramer 2, Sta. Maria 1, Yee 0.

Quarters: 18-12, 38-31, 55-51, 72-72, 84-81 (OT)



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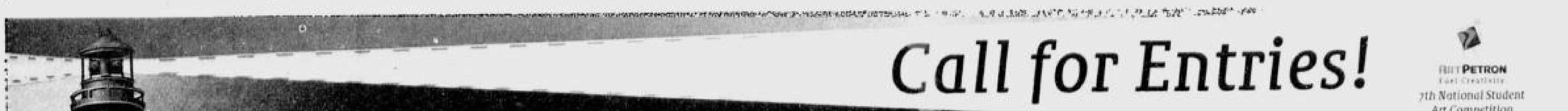

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Submission deadline: July 26 - Bulk Plants & Aug.2 - Project Secretariat

Pacquiao: De La Hoya by decision

By Roy Luarca

THEY MAY HAVE A MISUNDERSTANDING OVER FIGHT CONTRACTS, but Manny Pacquiao still goes for Oscar De La Hoya in an actual ring battle.

Pacquiao has picked De La Hoya to win by unanimous decision over Floyd Mayweather Jr. in their blockbuster bout dubbed "The World Awaits" on Saturday (Sunday in Manila) at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nevada.

"I'm for De La Hoya by decision," said Pacquiao, in a recent interview with The Freeman's Emmanuel Villaruel. "He is bigger and an excellent counter-puncher."

Pacquiao expects the fight between two of the world's most stylish boxers to be very close.

But if it reaches the full route, Pacquiao said De La Hoya—who is involved in a legal tussle with Bob Arum of Top Rank over the right to promote Pacquiao's next few fights—will prevail.

PACQUIAO: If it reaches full route

Despite De La Hoya's impressive 30 knockouts in 38 victories, however, Pacquiao insists chances are remote that he would be able to stop Mayweather, who is unbeaten in 37 fights with 24 knockouts.

"It's possible, but De La Hoya has only a five-percent chance of knocking out Mayweather because of their varied styles," explained Pacquiao. "De La Hoya is a counter-puncher while Mayweather is the type of boxer who loves to run around."

Pacquiao, chosen by both Ring Magazine and the Boxing Writers Association of America as this year's best fighter, said it would be difficult for De La Hoya to tag Mayweather because the American, regarded as the world's best boxer pound for pound, tends to back away after unleashing one or two punches.

And the 34-year-old De La Hoya, a noted counter-puncher, could find it hard to push Mayweather, 30, to the corner.

Meanwhile, two-time Trainer of the Year Freddie Roach said De La Hoya is in great shape for his bout against Mayweather which has been tagged as fight of the decade by many boxing quarters.

In an interview with Boxing Talk's Brad Cooney, Roach, Pacquiao's trainer who supervises De La Hoya's preparations in Puerto Rico, promised a more offensive-minded De La Hoya at fight time.

Roach also bared that Pacquiao had asked him to help prepare his younger brother, Bobby, for his fight against Mexican Humberto Soto on June 9 in New York.

Eric Buhain still no match for Raul Gonzalez

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(COUNTER-CLAIMS: A young man, identifying himself as the subject of the complaints carried in this column last Monday, called up and claimed the charges were all fictitious. He said he had been scolded by his father. He also failed to send the promised e-mail stating his case. We are withholding his identity until the return of Dr. Nasser Cruz, head of the GAB Boxing Division, who's attending a convention in Mexico... My kumpadre *Porong Crus of Sta, Maria Bulacan, tried to put his brandy money on Oscar de La Hoya, saying the Golden Boy would be too sharp and strong for Floyd Mayweather Jr. in their big fight Sunday. But Porong has been having second thoughts after he was warned the Golden Boy would have to be at his best, and go back at least 10 years, if he's to beat the unbeaten Mayweather.)*

NOBODY HAD DARED PREDICT whether the reign of former swimming star Eric Buhain would be the finest or the dirtiest in the history of the graft-ridden Games and Amusements Board (GAB).

In the first place, Buhain, being the son-in-law of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, could not afford to fail.

He has a role to uphold the integrity and dignity of the Office of the President.

The GAB, for the record, is directly under the Office of the President.

So how has Buhain been faring in the eyes of fans and keen-eyed critics, including battle-scarred former sports leaders?

* * *

There were enough people ready and willing to send in their verdict.

However, the first answer came Monday afternoon, close to the wine shop of the Cherry Foodarama in dear old Mandaluyong, where we checked on the stockpile of exquisite, fast-selling Torres brandy from Barcelona, Spain.

In the first place, does Buhain know his job at the GAB?

Yes, the first reply came also in the form of a question.

In fairness to Buhain, there were those who felt he could be either be over-qualified or simply was not fit for the job.

* * *

The sports patriarch who wanted to first check on Buhain's qualifications was no less than Maj. Julian Malonso (ret.), old, lean but still fiery former president of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Does Buhain know his job?

You need not read the leathery lines on his wizened face to know that Malonso was giving Buhain a failing grade.

Of course, Malonso had heard of the grand boo-boo that had resulted in the tragic death of the outmatched Lito Sisnorio, beaten senseless by former world flyweight champ Chatchai Sasakul of Thailand in Bangkok last March.

Malonso knew only too well how Buhain had wisely used that tragic ring death to sanitize the image of the GAB, thereby making it appear like a very efficient, responsible, no-nonsense sports body.

* * *

But next came the inevitable question on why Buhain had to be moved over to the GAB after his stint as chair of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Was he demoted or promoted?

Malonso appeared certain that, in Buhain's case, he was given a graceful exit from the PSC, where he left a trail of questionable bills that had obviously led to his trusted money man being officially grilled.

Well, before that ring death in Thailand, a result of official negligence, Buhain had to figure in other ridiculous incidents in boxing.

For example, he had once hinted, after yet another Las Vegas stint, that pound-for-pound great Floyd Mayweather Jr. could soon be lined up as a foe for Manny Pacquiao.

As the top Filipino official, Buhain also willingly allowed himself to be stranded with his family at the Tokyo Disneyland, thereby failing in his main function to attend the weigh-in for Rodel Mayol's world title challenge in Japan last year.

* * *

As though it would help cure the ever-growing ills in Philippine boxing, Buhain has ventured into hosting yet another confab, the World Boxing Council annual convention itself, this year.

Meanwhile, there was hardly a hint Buhain had heard of how the Philippines, just like Thailand itself, has all these years been hosting outrageous mismatches that see inept Thai boxers being fed to rising Filipino fighters, whose records had to be embellished in order to enhance their international ratings.

The Philippines, for the record, is similarly guilty as Thailand of this savagery in boxing.

Well, it's quite risky but, at least, Buhain was obviously learning the ropes during his uneven, if at times funny, stint as GAB chief.

His big backers in Malacañang could also say that, in Buhain's case, he is not obnoxious—not yet a full-fledged discredit to the Office of the President—as the flamboyant, unsinkable Secretary of Justice Raul Gonzalez.

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Tel. No. (02) 454-0254
Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF AGUSTA HELICOPTER

The National Food Authority Central Office invites all interested parties to bid for one (1) unit Agusta Helicopter, description of which is as follows:

Brand	Construzoini Aeronautiche Giovanni
Model Number	AGUSTA 109A
Serial No.	7184
Year Manufactured	1980
Registration No.	RP-609
Specifications	8 seater, including 2 pilots, 4 main rotor blades, powered by 420 HP single turbine engine, Allison Model 250-C20B, Serial Nos. CAE 832080 and CAE-832146, complete with standard avionics. With Certificate of Registration valid until September 2, 2007.
Minimum Bid Price	Twenty One Million Pesos (P21,000,000.00)

Bid proposals shall be on "as-is-where-is" basis. Offerors shall be required to post a bid security equivalent to one percent (1%) of the total amount based on his/her bid offer. It shall either be in the form of cash, manager's check or cashier's check payable to NFA.

Bid documents, such as tender form, including terms and conditions shall be issued only to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable/non-transferable fee of P50,000.00 not later than 2:00 p.m. on May 14, 2007. For furhter details, you may contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone number 455-2758.

Activities relative to this bidding shall be held at the NFA Boardroom, 6th Floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Pre-Bid Conference - May 15, 2007, 2:00 PM
Receipt and Opening of Bids - May 25, 2007
Submission of Bid - 1:00 PM to 1:45 PM
Opening of Bids - 2:00 PM

NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept only such bids which in its judgment are most reasonable and advantageous to NFA. The decision of the Committee as confirmed by the BAC Chairman shall be deemed final.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & BAC Chairperson

(PDI - April 25 & May 2, 2007)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder poject:

Name of Project / Brief Description	BSP Regional Frame Relay Leased Line Upgrade Lot 1 – Lucena, Angeles, Cabanatuan, Dagupan, Tuguegarao, Balac and La Union Lot 2 – Kalibo, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cotabato and Zamboanga Lot 3 – Naga, Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu and Davao
Approved Budget for the Contract	Lot 1 – P4,100,000.00 Lot 2 – P4,600,000.00 Lot 3 – P4,700,000.00
Completion Period	The project shall be completed (implementation of services, including successful test and acceptance) within ninety (90) calendar days upon receipt of the Notice to Proceed from ITIOD which will be secured within five (5) working days after receipt of the approved contract.

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project awarded and completed within the last five (5) years (Y2002 to present) amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract for the bidded lot/s. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activites	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	02 May-17 May 2007 (not later than 1:30 p.m.)
2. Pre-Bid Conference	18 May 2007, 3:00 p.m., Room MR2A
3. Opening of Bids	05 June 2007, 2:00 P.M., Room MR2A
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods) allowed in the Implemaning Rules & Regulations (IRR)-) A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount equivalent to 0.05% of the ABC of the lot to be bid to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Vice-Chairman

(PDI-May 2, 2007)

Tigers open bid; Lions seek 2nd victory

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
10 a.m.—Ateneo vs Mapua
12 noon—San Beda vs NU
2 p.m.—PCU vs UE
4 p.m.—UST vs Perpetual Help

UAAP DEFENDING CHAMPION University of Santo Tomas kicks off its campaign, while NCAA titlist San Beda seeks its second straight victory in the Filoil-Flying V Pre-Season Invitational Cup today at The Arena in San Juan.

The Tigers, led by Jervy Cruz and Jojo Duncil, will cap a heavy four-game bill against the University of Perpetual Help Altas at 4 p.m.

Fresh from their opening-day escape, the Lions shoot for a 2-0 card against the National University Bulldogs at noon.

Ateneo tries to bounce back from its first-day setback against arch rival La Salle when it takes on Mapua at 10 a.m.

University of the East and Philippine Christian University clash at 2 p.m.

Yousif Aljamal and Pong Escobal bailed out the Lions against the Letran Knights in the last 21.8 seconds by nailing their charities for a 75-72 win on Sunday.

Escobal topscored with 23 points, while rookie Gabby Lanete added 16.

A Team B-laden Ateneo crew bowed to La Salle, 71-69, also Sunday.

UST coach Pido Jarencio said the Tigers will hone their passing and shooting skills to boost their repeat bid in the UAAP.

Jasmine W. Payo

Pag-IBIG FUND
The Atrium of Makati
Makati Avenue, Makati City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES
FOR THE PAG-IBIG FUND'S NON-PERFORMING ASSETS (NPA)
RESOLUTION PROGRAM

The Pag-IBIG Fund intends to apply the sum of One Hundred Twenty Five Million Pesos (PhP 125,000,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments for Financial Advisory Services for the Pag-IBIG Fund's Non-Performing Assets (NPA) Resolution Program, broken down as follows:

Phase I	-	NPA Due Diligence & Strategic Advisory Fee	P 60M
Phase II	-	Transaction Structing & Preparation Fee	
Phase III	-	Transaction Success Fee	P 60M
Out-of-pocket expenses and other fees			P 5M

The transaction success fee for Phase III, which covers Transaction Management, Execution and Closing, shall not exceed one half percent (1/2%) of the realized value of the Non-Performing Asset Pool.

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.

The Pag-IBIG Fund now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential Bidders, without pending case/s with the Fund, to apply for eligibility and shortlisting for **Financial Advisory Services for the Pag-IBIG Fund's Non-Performing Assets (NPA) Resolution Program**. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs, by hand or through mail, to the BAC-CS (FA) Secretariat on or before **5:00 p.m. of May 16, 2007** at Rm. 704, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City and secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom. The BAC-CS (FA) Secretariat will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms, upon their submission of the LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of **Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 5,000.00)** to the Pag-IBIG Fund Cashier. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass / fail" basis. A birieling on eligibility requirements will be held at **2:00 p.m. on May 18, 2007** at Room 602, 6/F The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City. The deadline for the submission of Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on **May 24, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at the Procurement Division, General Services Department Rm. 704, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

The BAC-CS (FA) shall draw up the short list of prospective bidders from those who have submitted LOIs, met the minimum requirements prescribed by the Pag-IBIG Fund and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall not exceed seven (7). The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

Consultant's References		-	30%
Performance		-	70%
Track Record	(60%)		
Job Capacity	(30%)		
Financial Capacity	(10%)		
TOTAL :			**100%**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures, and is limited to bidders, natural or juridical persons, that comply with the requirements provided for under the provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. Only short listed bidders may secure bid documents from the BAC-CS (FA) Secretariat. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from short listed bidders will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification using the **Quality Based Evaluation (QBE)** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Pag-IBIG Fund thru the BAC-CS (FA) Secretariat at Rm. 704, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

The contract shall be completed within the following timelines:

Phase I	-	within six (6) months from commencement of work as indicated in the Notice to Proceed
Phase II	-	within three (3) months from the completion and approval of Phase I
Phase III	-	within six (6) months from date of approval of Phase II.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) TESSIE M. GONZALES
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee for
Consultancy Services
(Financial Advisor)

(PDI--May 2, 2007)

Forest Hills Invt'l tees off tomorrow

ANTIPOLO—MORE THAN 200 TEAMS MADE UP OF members and their guests tee off starting tomorrow for the sixth staging of the Forest Hills Invitational.

A Hyundai Getz, two round-trip business class tickets to the United States, a Precedent golf cart and P100,000 cash are at stake as hole-in-one prizes.

If no one scores an ace on the hole where the Getz is at stake, Forest Hills GM Romy Carlos said that the car will be raffled off during the awarding ceremonies on May 6.

"It's our way of making our invitational tournament truly successful," Carlos said. "The turnout of participants has simply been phenomenal, and we thank our members and their guests for making it as such."

Each member-guest team will play two rounds in three days over the rolling course using the Stableford system of scoring.

The tournament major sponsors are Golforce, Taishan Golf Insurance, Sun Cellular, Northwest Airlines and the Turf Company.

P1-M poker today at airport casino

SATELLITE (QUALIFYING) COMPETITIONS FOR THE the third Philippine Poker Tour (PPT) Million-Peso Hold'em Championship will be held today at Airport Casino Filipino Parañaque and on Saturday at Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

Registration starts at 5 p.m. at Airport Casino and 2 p.m. at Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

Winners of satellite events are awarded berths in the grand finals slated July 7 and 8. Each slot is worth P33,000 in tournament and registration fees.

The first qualifying competition in the south is slated at Casino Filipino Lahug in Cebu on May 19 followed by tourneys in Bacolod and Davao.

Regular weekly satellite tournaments are also ongoing at San Mig Alabang Town Center every Wednesday and Friday, and at Elbow Room at MetroWalk in Pasig every Thursday.

For details, visit www.PhilippinePokerTour.com or call the secretariat at 817-9092 or 812-0153.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Matikas (5), Boss UFO Naman (1), Hurry My Love (4)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Crystal City (6), Leica N'Raven/ Lord Elgene (4), Prince Aldan (1), Spinning Bullet (2)
Race 3—(Tri)—Jaded Danger (2), China Doll (3), Phil's Game (1)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Gemstone (3), Olive Oyl (5), Half Medium (5), Top Of D'Line (4)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Gondor (1), Dynamic Mind (8), Jagger (7), Fabiola (2)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Rose N Fire (1), Kapuso (6), Fear Me Not (2), Lady Inday (5)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Inca (3), Sunline (6), Freedom Charger (4), Yanong Rikit (80, Friendly Venture (5)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Sound Value (4), Sir Guguy (10), Bumpy Johnson (6), Pentagon (5), Hammer It Home (7), Mady Beware (8)

Cavs put an end to Wizards' misery

WASHINGTON—DOWN BY THREE points with 5-1/2 minutes left in Game 4, the Cleveland Cavaliers needed someone to put the Washington Wizards away.

Time to turn to LeBron James, right? Not exactly.

Actually, Larry Hughes and Zadrunas Ilgauskas combined for Cleveland's next 18 points, and James didn't have a basket the rest of the way Monday night, when the Cavaliers beat the Wizards, 97-90, to complete the franchise's first playoff sweep.

If the Wizards were known for having the "Big Three"—until, that is, Gilbert Arenas and Caron Butler went down with April injuries—it's the Cavaliers who have developed a talented trio that dominated the first-round series.

"We can't win if these guys don't play well, Z and Larry. Simple as that," said James, who finished with 31 points despite shooting 8-for-22 from the field. "I need them every game to be a factor. Us three, if we don't play well, we're not going to have a chance to win."

Win they did, if only barely, in all four games against a depleted Washington squad that led the Eastern Conference halfway through the season but never really had a chance once its two All-Stars went down.

"Gil's a strong personality. Caron's a strong personality. They're tough," Wizards coach Eddie Jordan said. "They bring more to the table than just numbers, and their numbers were huge."

In other playoff games Monday night, Houston beat Utah 96-92 and San Antonio defeated Denver 96-89.

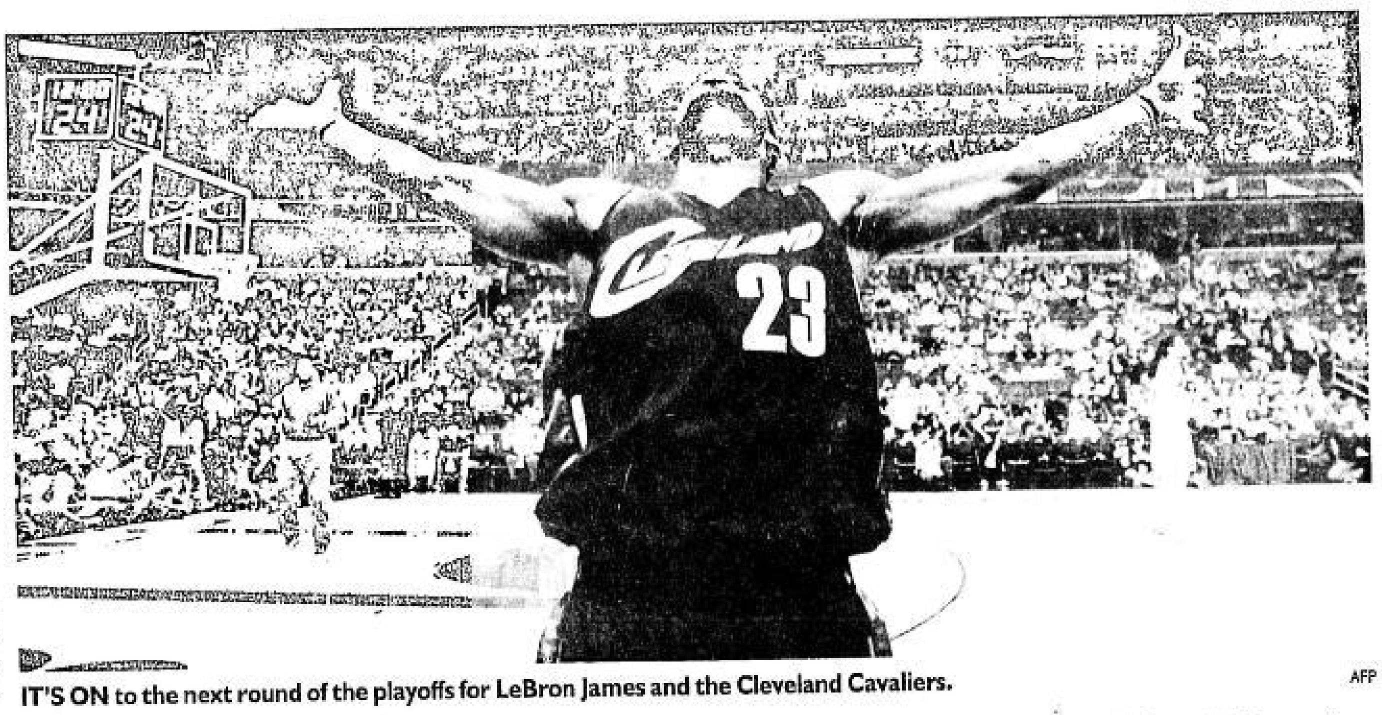
Last season, the Cavaliers relied on James to carry them past the Wizards in a tight first-round series that featured three games decided by one point.

Back then, Cleveland was excited about being a postseason participant. Nowadays, James and Co.—seeded No. 2 in the Eastern Conference—want to make some noise.

"Last year, going into the playoffs, it was all about making the playoffs," James said. "I hadn't been there in my NBA career, and Z hadn't been there since his rookie season, so that was our main focus: 'Let's make the playoffs. Let's make the playoffs.' But we've got bigger and better things now. It's about winning a championship, and we're one step closer."

The Cavaliers will take on the New Jersey Nets or the Toronto Raptors—who are playing the East's only first-round series that wasn't a sweep.

In Houston, Tracy McGrady had 26 points and a career-high 16 assists, and Yao Ming had 21 points and 15 rebounds for the Rockets, who took a 3-2 lead with their third home win. Yao sealed the victory with two free throws with 11 seconds left.



IT'S ON to the next round of the playoffs for LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers. AFP

The Rockets can clinch their first postseason series victory since 1997 in Game 6 at Utah on Thursday.

In Denver, Robert Horry, known for hitting big shots at the end of playoff games, nailed a 3-pointer with 30 seconds left to seal the win that gave visiting San Antonio a 3-1 lead in the first-round series.

The Spurs can close out the best-of-seven series at home Wednesday night.

The Nuggets, who led by 10 points in the second half, pulled to 90-89 on Steve Blake's jumper which looked like a 3 but his toe was on the line. Following a timeout, Tony Parker took the inbounds pass, penetrated the lane and kicked out to Horry in the right corner—his second basket of the night. *AP*

Woods teams up with Jordan in Wachovia pro-am

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA—Tiger Woods and basketball great Michael Jordan will play together for the first time in official competition in the build-up to this week's Wachovia Championship, organizers said on Monday.

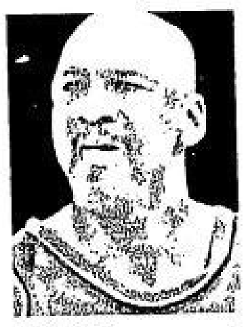
World No. 1 Woods and fellow American Jordan, good friends for several years, have been paired in the same threesome for Wednesday's pro-am at Quail Hollow Club.

"We are pleased to have this opportunity to enhance the patrons' experience on Wednesday," tournament director Kim Hougham said in a statement.

"These two gentlemen are two of the most well-known athletes in the world and to have them both here for one day playing in the same group is a special treat."

Dan Fleishman, director of sponsorships and alliances for Wachovia, added: "Michael and Tiger are good friends and have played a lot of personal golf together. We are grateful they agreed to compete in the pro-am together this year."

WOODS AFP



JORDAN AP

Jordan has made a habit of watching Woods compete in golf's biggest events, such as the four majors and the biennial Ryder Cup team competition.

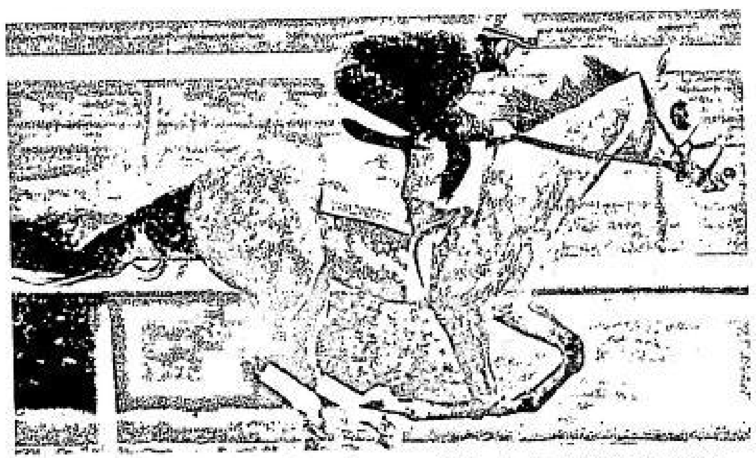
He has also acted as a mentor to Woods since the golfer turned professional in late 1996, advising him on how to handle all the pressures of being a high-profile celebrity.

Woods, out of PGA Tour action since tying for second at the Masters three weeks ago, heads a strong field at Quail Hollow that includes 28 players in the world's top 30.

Second-ranked American Jim Furyk defends the title he won in a playoff with South African Trevor Immelman at Quail Hollow last year.

Also competing this week is world number seven Vijay Singh, the 2005 winner, who has triumphed twice on the 2007 PGA Tour.

The Wachovia Championship starts on Thursday. *Reuters*



GETTING READY: Jockey Juan Leyva and Kentucky Derby hopeful Imawildandcrazyguy test the track at Churchill Downs in Louisville. The race kicks off Saturday (Sunday in Manila) AP

Final jungolf qualifying event gets going today

THE CHASE FOR THE COUNTRY'S slots to the Callaway Junior World championships in San Diego culminates with the final 54 holes of the local qualifying today at the Sherwood Hills course recently acknowledged as one of the best in the world and the Riviera executive course in Cavite.

Exciting action is expected in the final half of a 108-hole qualifier as the leaders in the top divisions are tightly bunched with Miko Yee leading John Kier Abdon just by one in the boys group and Thailand Open winner Regina de Guzman tied with Paulina Sotto in the girls side of Class A.

Boys Class C is also a toss-up between perennial winner Miguel Tabuena and Bino dela Paz who are the joint leaders in their division while Angela de Villa is holding on to a precarious two-shot advantage in girls Class B.

Yee's younger brother Miggy, siblings Wolen and Princess Superal, Irina Gabasa, Lance Uy, Mia Legaspi, Kristine Torralba and Daniel Bantug will try to hold on to the leads they built at the Manila Southwoods leg last week of the tourney backed chiefly by Philippine Airlines and Callaway/Electrobus Consolidated, Inc.

PAL is giving each of the 12 divisions after this week's qualifier ending Friday a ticket to Los Angeles, California for the annual Callaway Junior World meet.

RILEY REUTERS

Heat: Injuries hurt our season

MIAMI—THE MIAMI HEAT'S RUN FOR a second straight title ended meekly as they bowed out of the NBA playoffs after being swept in four games by the Chicago Bulls.

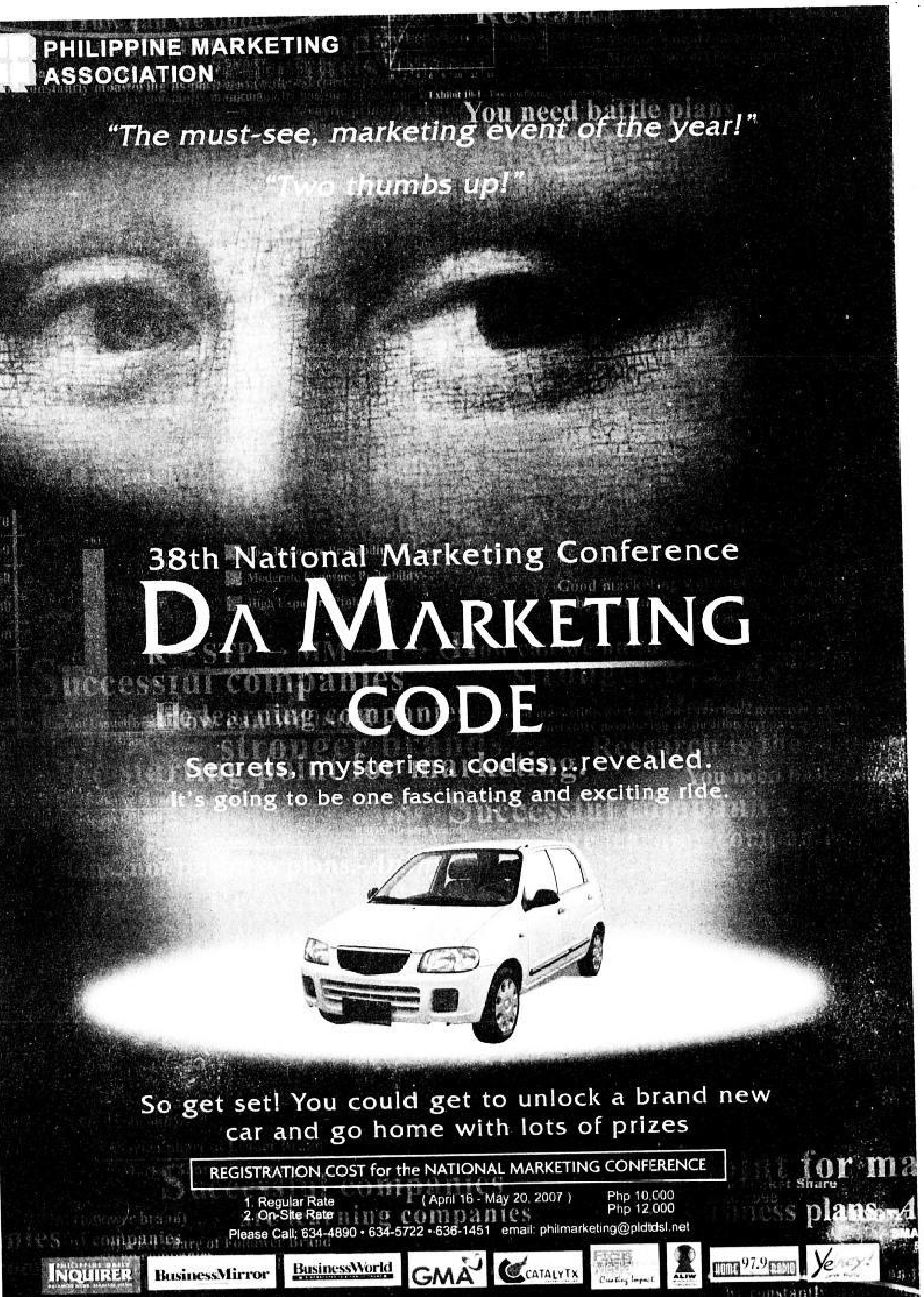
The season was framed by embarrassing home losses to the Bulls—a 42-point setback on opening night that spoiled the raising of the franchise's first championship banner and a 13-point loss Sunday to the same Bulls.

In between, there were injuries to just about every key team member, including coach Pat Riley. Two players served brief suspensions for being out of shape, and two others were arrested.

"I think about the season and all that we had to go through," Alonzo Mourning said after the season-ending loss. "I wish I had the rights to the season because I could have turned it into a (television) mini-series."

The Heat did not move above .500 for good until March 5. They backed into the Southeast Division title with a pedestrian 44-38 mark as the Washington Wizards collapsed under the weight of injuries to All-Stars Gilbert Arenas and Caron Butler.

"(We had) injuries and guys not being together all 82 games, but we hung in there and won our division and got the four spot," Shaquille O'Neal said. *AFP*



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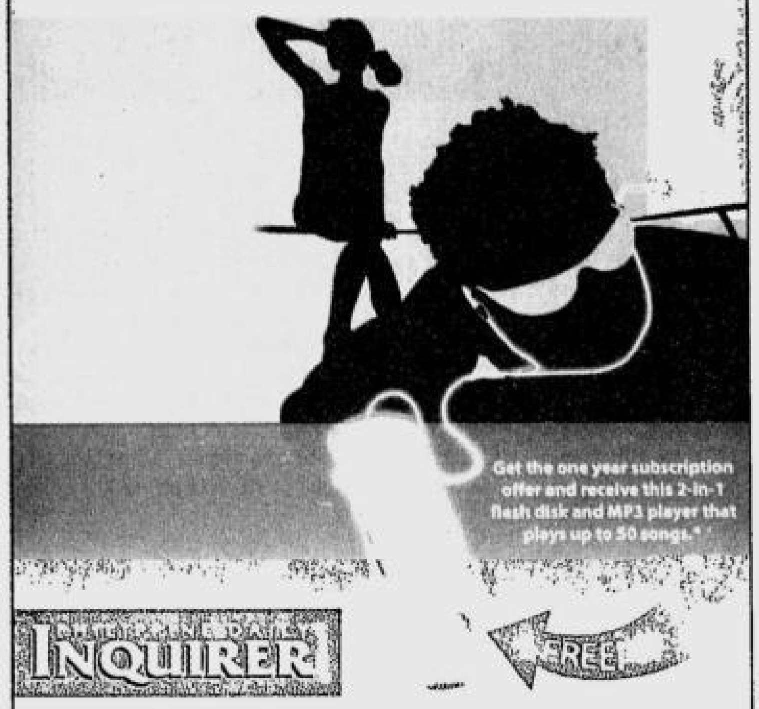
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Eyeball-to-eyeball in Pikit

Inter Manila booters nip Indian FC in thriller

WINGER RAUL DEL ROSARIO struck in the 88th minute to lift Inter Manila to a 3-2 win against Indian FC on Saturday in the 2nd MPLFA-AAVA Premier League at the Cuenca football pitch at Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The International School and Poveda soccer coach evaded his defenders on the left wing to slot in a 15-yard roller for Inter Manila's first victory in Group 2 of Division 1.

Inter Manila controlled the tempo early in the match, netting the opening goal in the 15th through a nifty header inside the box by striker Hikaru Bolt off a free kick by Steve Dodd from 20 yards out.

The Indians tied the count 10 minutes later, thanks to striker Surfjit Singh, who volleyed home from 35 yards. Teammate Danny Sohal made it 2-1 in the 34th minute with a 25-yard blast from the left wing.

Malaysian Roy Rashidi of Inter forged the second deadlock a minute later, splitting the Indian defense inside the penalty area to score from 25 feet.

In Group 1, Boogie Margarse scored two goals to hand defending champion Manila Soccer Academy (2-1) a 6-2 win over Korean FC.

In another tight encounter between erstwhile unbeaten sides, Loyola nosed out San Beda, 2-1, to seize the Group 2 lead in Division 2 with its third triumph in a row.

In other matches, Quezon City FA (3-0) subdued Oscariz, 3-2, and Indon FC (2-1) topped Tuloy Don Bosco (0-2), 3-1, both in Group 1; and Sta. Rosa (1-1) whipped Altas (0-2), 3-0, in Group 2.

POC to NSAs: Tap private backers

By June Navarro

WITH GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR the country's stint in the 2008 Beijing Olympics hanging in the balance, national sports associations (NSAs) will have to look for support elsewhere.

Philippine Olympic Committee chair Robert Aventajado yesterday urged NSAs, whose athletes are priming up for the Beijing Games, to tap the private sector for funding instead of waiting for government assistance.

AVENTAJADO

Aventajado's advice came after both the fund-raising campaign of the Philippine Sports Commission and the First Gentleman Foundation for the Olympics were stalled.

Originally scheduled to kick off last March, the national Olympic training program was moved to the last week of May due to budgetary constraints.

The President's husband, Mike Arroyo, pledged to bankroll the training of athletes from 14 sports identified as strong gold-medal prospects in Beijing.

According to PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez, about P250 million will be needed for the Olympic preparation of Team Philippines.

Ramirez said most of the funding would be spent on the specialized overseas training of selected athletes.

The fund-raising drive, however, was deferred to a date after the May 14 elections or, after Arroyo has fully recovered from a recent open-heart surgery.

"We have started to look for private sponsors," said Aventajado, who is also president of the Philippine Taekwondo Association.

The national taekwondo jins are among the biggest prospects to bring home the country's first-ever Olympic gold medal.

Aside from taekwondo, the country is looking to boxing to end the gold-medal drought.

Taekwondo enjoys a staunch backer in Petron while boxing is hoping to tie up again with Caltex.

Budget permitting, the PSC is looking to send 20 athletes or so from six sports, including swimming, diving, fencing and gymnastics, to China on May 30 for extensive training, Ramirez said.

Focus on new jins in Petron tilt

LOCAL TAEKWONDO'S FUTURE stars could emerge this weekend with the staging of the 2007 Petron-Smart New Face of the Year championships on May 5 and 6 at the Rizal Coliseum.

About 1,500 jins from all affiliated chapters of the Philippine Taekwondo Association in Metro Manila, the provinces and the armed services will see action, according to PTA president Robert N. Aventajado.

"This is the event newcomers have been looking forward to every year," explains Aventajado.

Competition will be conducted in eight categories, namely, senior men and women, junior men and women, mid-junior men and women and grade school boys and girls.

Organizing committee chair Sung Chon Hong said the tournament fulfills the taekwondo body's commitment to develop the sport and support the government's grassroots program.

"In this event, newcomers are exposed to competition," said Hong. The tournament is backed by Smart, Petron, Milo, PLDT, Philippine Sports Commission and Accel. Sports buffs are invited to watch the competition. Action starts at 9 a.m.

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- **Double-digit growth** in VAT collection seen /B4

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US keeps RP on watchlist of IPR violators

INQUIRER MONITOR

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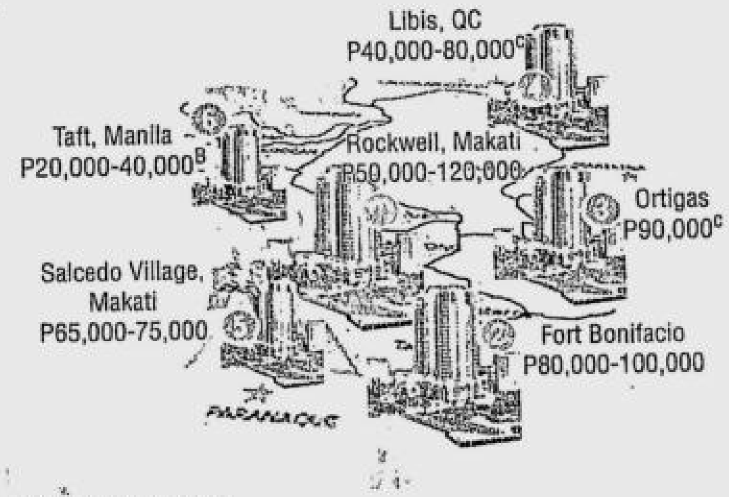
Monthly residential lease rates for fully-furnished two-bedroom units^A (in pesos)



* Ranked according to maximum rent

[A] Grade A spaces usually furnished with refrigerators, television, beds and sala sets
[B] Grade B spaces usually function as dormitories for students
[C] Three-bedroom spaces

Sources: Pronove Tai & Associates
Kate Pedroso Inquirer Research

Trade agency cites Quiapo as notorious market

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE UNITED STATES KEPT THE PHILIPPINES IN ITS WATCHLIST of countries where violations of intellectual property rights remain a concern, citing the neighborhood of Quiapo among the world's notorious markets of pirated goods.

The country was listed with 23 other countries in the US Trade Representative's so-named Special 301 Report watchlist, which mostly named developing countries but also developed countries like Canada and Italy.

The US Trade Act of 1974—as amended through subsequent laws passed in 1988 and 1994—mandates the USTR to identify yearly "countries that deny adequate and effective protection for IPR or deny fair and equitable market access" for persons that rely on IP protection.

The USTR has also created a "Priority Watchlist" and a "Watchlist" indicating the relative gravity of issues related IPR protection.

This is the Philippines' second year in the watchlist after it was moved from the priority watchlist following favorable results of an "out-of-cycle review" done in late 2005. The country had been on the PWL since 2001.

In the 52-page report released yesterday, the neighborhood of Quiapo in Manila was cited as notorious for selling counterfeit and pirated items, where stalls had been the target of many raids last year.

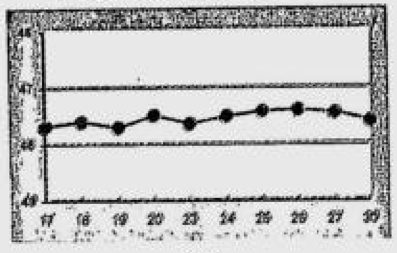
"Global piracy and counterfeiting continue to thrive, in part due to large marketplaces that deal in infringing goods," the USTR said.

"This year's Special 301 Report notes [a list of markets that includes Quiapo] as examples

US KEEPS/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



APRIL

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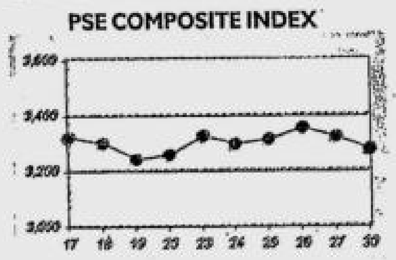
STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Trading resumes today

FINANCIAL MARKETS IN MANY ASIAN nations were closed yesterday for Labor Day or other national holidays.

Holidays were observed in mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand.

Major Asian markets that were open Tuesday included Australia, Indonesia, Japan and New Zealand.

Local stock trading resumes today.

Gov't spent ₱175.58B to service debts in 1st quarter

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SPENT P175.58 billion in the first quarter to service its debts, or 37 percent lower than the P279.36 billion allocated in the same period last year.

Finance officials attributed the drop to lower interest rates and the appreciation of the peso against the dollar.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz also noted earlier that the government's need to borrow was decreasing because of its declining budget deficit. The prepayment of some government obligations also cut the debt burden and, in turn, the amount needed to service the loans.

Although the government's allocation for debt service marked a substantial drop from a year ago, it still ate a huge portion of its P237.3 billion in total revenue collections. This meant that debt servicing in the first quarter accounted for 74 percent of revenue collections.

The amount of debt servicing also breached the official ceiling of P172.82 billion set for the first quarter.

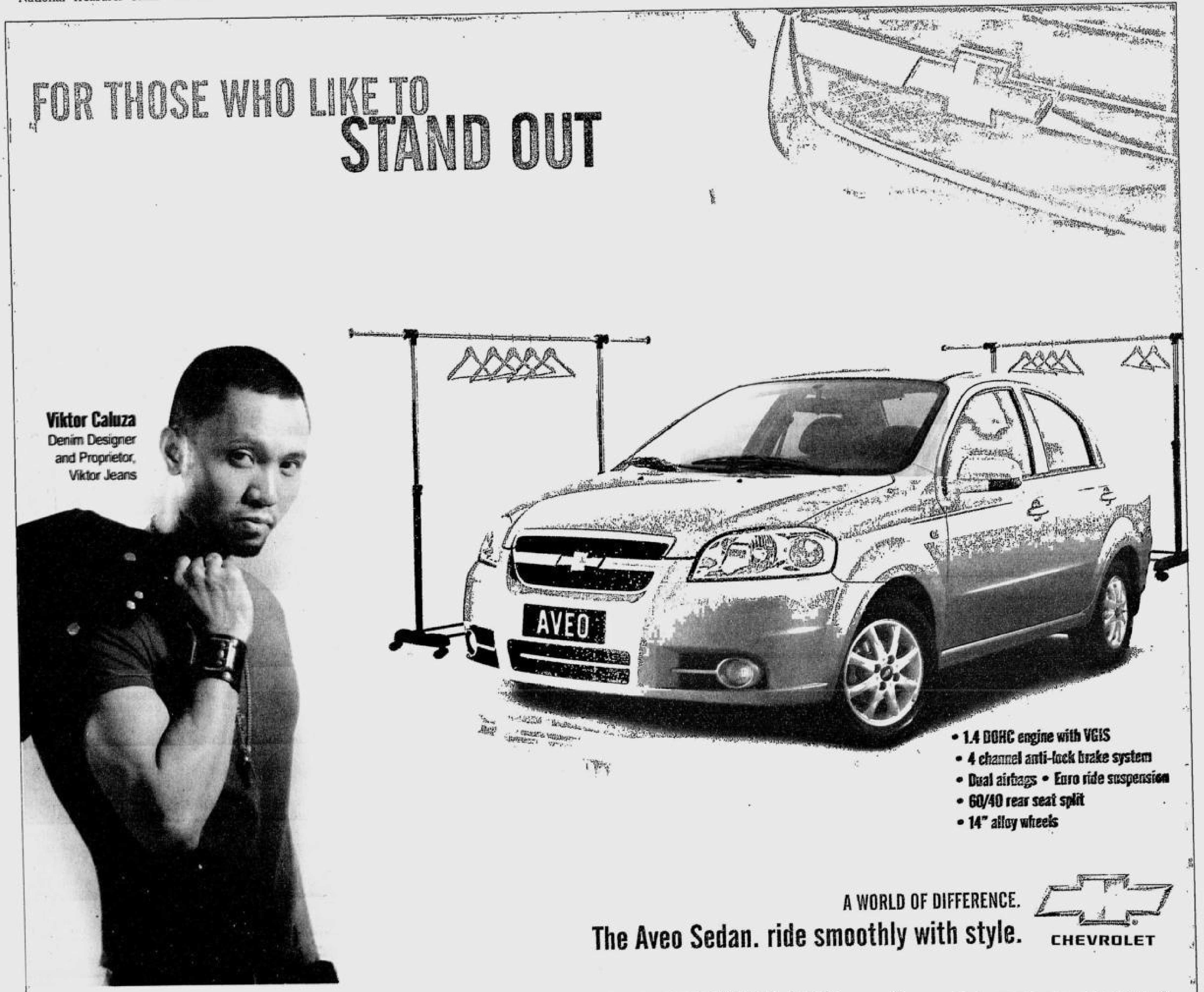
Of the amount spent to service debts, P86.43 billion went to principal payments and P89.149 billion was for interest.

About two-thirds or P110.13 billion went to settle local obligations and foreign debt servicing accounted for the remaining P65.45 billion.

The government sources the money it uses to pay off its debts partly from the taxes collected from the public and from non-tax revenues such as proceeds of privatization of state assets.

But since revenue collections are not enough to service all its maturing debts, albeit cover other expenses such as salaries of state workers, infrastructure

GOV'T/ B2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Basic eyes energy ventures

Firm seeks amendments to articles of incorporation

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE STILL INTO MINING and petroleum exploration, listed firm Basic Petroleum Inc. is set to aggressively pursue renewable and alternative energy ventures, even amending its articles of incorporation to include such projects.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Basic Petroleum said its board had proposed the inclusion in the firm's business purpose the "production, manufacturing, sourcing, storage, distribution and supply, handling and transport of biofuels and raw materials used in the production of biofuels."

Other areas that the company could get into, according to its proposed secondary purpose, are the manufacturing and distribution of raw materials used in the production of alternative and renewable energy, and materials "for motive, thermal, power and energy generation."

Under the same proposal, Basic could also engage in the "development, cultivation and production, storage, distribution and supply, handling and transport of sugarcane and other crops and resources which shall be formed as biomass to be used as feedstock in the production and manufacture of biofuels and other alternative and renewable energy resources."

In line with this, the company could pursue the acquisition of land, leasehold, franchises, privileges, concessions and other rights and interest for these ventures.

Basic had agreed to purchase Zambo Norte BioEnergy Corp. (ZNBC), a would-be ethanol producer, for P64 million.

Under a memorandum of understanding inked with ZNBC owner ZN Biofuels Partners Inc., Basic would acquire ZNBC for P64 million, with P10 million payable in cash and the rest in Basic shares.

The Basic board, in an April 27 meeting, authorized the company management to negotiate with ZNB Partners on the implementation of the MOU and the payment of the P5-million cash balance, as well as the payment of an additional P6 million for the preparation of feedstock for the proposed ethanol project.

Under the MOU, ZNB Partners should guaranty ZNBC's acquisition of 25 hectares of land for the planned ethanol facility.

Anglo OKs dividend

ANGLO PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS CORP., A publicly traded holding company with investments in natural resources and commercial property development, last year posted P399.3 million in profit, up 30 percent from year-ago's P308.1 million.

This resulted in an earnings per share (EPS) of 37 centavos.

Also, first quarter 2007 unaudited income reached P219.4 million, or 180 percent more than year-ago's P78.6 million.

Given a record profit, APHC's board has declared a 10-percent cash dividend for all shareholders as of May 17, payable on June 8.

The company also set aside P50 million for the buyback of shares, which the board deemed to be grossly undervalued.

CebuPac profit up

CEBU PACIFIC'S NET INCOME LAST YEAR surged to P133.9 million from P3.7 million in 2005.

The aviation unit of the Gokongweis' JG Summit Holdings Inc. also posted 24-percent increase in revenue to P9.7 billion last year from the previous year's P7.8 billion.

The growth was attributed to a more fuel efficient aircraft fleet, better aircraft utilization, a dramatic rise in the number and profitability of international routes, and a revenue management system that helped maintain high passenger loads.

GG&A Club Shares
SEC License Broker No.: BD-00131
Quotation as of May 2, 2007

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,200,000	1,050,000
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,300,000	1,050,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	550,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB "B"	-	50,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	330,000	280,000
CANLUBANG	470,000	430,000
CANYON WOODS	100,000	75,000
CAPITOL HILLS	40,000	-
CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	1,900,000	1,700,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	120,000	100,000
CLUB FILIPINO	100,000	80,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	250,000	-
EASTRIDGE "B"	120,000	100,000
FOREST HILLS "A"	85,000	-
LUISITA GOLF "A"	350,000	270,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	220,000	180,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	230,000	180,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	-	17,000,000
MANILA GOLF (IND)	-	16,000,000
MANILA POLO	Please Call	Please Call
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	300,000	-
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	700,000	630,000
MANILA YACHT CLUB	200,000	-
MIMOSA (IND)	200,000	-
MT. MALARAYAT GOLD "A"	180,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	180,000	150,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	340,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	350,000	-
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	160,000	145,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	300,000	220,000
SPA & LODGE	Please Call	450,000
STA. ELENA "A"	-	1,500,000
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	300,000	-
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	700,000	650,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	620,000
THE PALMS COUNTRY CLUB "A"	380,000	330,000
VALLE VERDE (IND)	100,000	-
VALLEY GOLF	220,000	200,000
WACK-WACK GOLF CLUB	-	8,000,000

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US keeps RP . . .

From page B1

of marketplaces that have been the subject of enforcement action, or may merit further investigation for possible IPR infringements, or both."

Other "notorious markets" listed were a Russian and a Chinese website and various physical sites in the same countries plus others in Indonesia, Thailand, Mexico, Czech Republic and the border areas of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay.

However, the report clarified that "the list represents a selective summary of information reviewed during the Special 301 process; it is not a finding of violations of law."

The report also said that goods entering the Philippines en route to other destinations—which pose a high risk for counterfeiting and piracy—was a significant issue here, especially in freeport zones.

The USTR urged the Philippines and other countries to improve IPR border enforcement systems, particularly because customs procedures may be used to disguise the true country of origin of the goods or to enter goods into territories where border enforcement is known to be weak.

Still, the report noted the progress that the Philippines have made toward implementing controls on optical media production.

The report noted that throughout 2006, the Philippines continued to implement the Optical Media Act, including regulating the licensing of optical disc plants and coordinating raids against pirate optical disc production factories and retail establishments.

The report also observed that the Intellectual Property Office continued to coordinate among IPR enforcement agencies.

"While recognizing these continued IPR enforcement actions, the United States urges the Philippines to continue strengthening its enforcement regime against piracy and counterfeiting," USTR said.

"Specifically, the United States encourages the Philippines to increase the numbers of arrests, prosecutions and convictions of pirates arising out of the optical disc plant inspections (and) ensure that courts impose deterrent sentences against criminal IPR infringers (such as) significant fines or prison sentences that are actually served," it pointed out.

BPI Secures BSP Approval to Offer Php 5B Worth of LTNCD

The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) recently secured the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to issue PHP 5 Billion worth of Long-Term Negotiable Certificates of Deposit or LTNCD. According to BPI President Aurelio R. Montinola III, the issuance is in line with BPI's objective of taking its customers farther; the LTNCD will be a superior investment option for BPI's depositors and will boost the Bank's capability to offer long-term fixed rate loans to its borrowers.

The BPI LTNCD is a 5-year fixed rate negotiable certificate of deposit denominated in Philippine Pesos. LTNCDs offer the investors a safe, liquid, but high-yielding fixed rate investment. Just like an ordinary time deposit account, the amount invested in LTNCDs is insured with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) for up to PHP 250,000 per depositor, offering an extra layer of comfort to the investor.

The BPI LTNCDs carry a maturity of five years and one month from date of issue, and may be availed of with a minimum investment of only PHP 100,000, through its selling agents BPI Capital Corporation and Standard Chartered Bank. However, with its bond-like feature, LTNCDs are negotiable instruments, allowing investors to purchase and sell these in the secondary market at any time, as an independent market maker commits to provide daily bid and offer prices.

Under the BSP approval, BPI is allowed to issue PHP 2 Billion with a greenshoe option, with the first tranche not exceeding PHP 5 Billion.

BPI is one of the country's largest and most stable banks, with unparalleled net income of PHP 9 Billion for the year ended 2006. BPI is also the recipient of several best bank awards from prestigious international institutions, namely Global Finance, Finance Asia, Euromoney, The Banker and The Asset. The Asian Banker likewise awarded it the Best Retail Bank. The offering of BPI LTNCDs is the Bank's way of expressing its commitment to be a partner in achieving the customer's financial aspirations. At the same time, this issuance enables BPI to further contribute in the development of the local capital markets.

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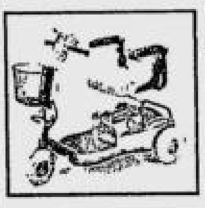

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 30, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANK					
17.5	5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	13	13	12.75	13	17,500
73	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	65.5	65.5	64.5	64.5	1,159,000
65.5	30.5	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	59.5	59.5	59	59.5	277,700
935	624	China Banking Corp.	855	855	855	855	1,100
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	300
119	60	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	106	106	104	105	37,010
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.54	0.55	0.54	0.54	2,960,000
68.5	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	63.5	63.5	62.5	62.5	2,685,700
55	30.5	Philippine National Bank	45.5	45.5	45.5	45.5	17,000
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	63	63	63	63	6,200
39.57	12.17	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	28	28	27.5	28	4,373,800
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	77.5	78	77.5	78	182,300
7.7	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	7.4	7.4	7.1	7.1	130,000
0.8	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	100,000
5	4.2	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.5	4.55	4.2	4.3	53,291,000
1,005.00	200	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	540	540	535	535	3,000
2,250	1,895	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,100	2,190	2,190	2,190	480
1.8	1.02	iVantage Corp.	1.66	1.74	1.66	1.72	5,124,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
0.37	0.16	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	280,000
62.5	41	First Gen Corp.	57.5	57.5	56.5	57	490,400
82.5	40.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	76	77	76	76.5	1,038,600
12.75	6.5	Manila Water Company Inc.	12	12.25	12	12	8,639,600
81	12.75	Manila Electric Company A	70	72.5	70	72	660,300
82	18.5	Manila Electric Company B	71	73	70.5	72.5	4,327,900
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.6	10,066,000
5.7	3.35	Petron Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	14,604,000
1.62	0.89	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	350,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.6	215,000
2.96	1.08	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.14	2.2	2.1	2.14	460,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	14,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	49.5	49.5	556,300
1.62	0.69	RFM Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	169,000
4.05	2.36	Roxas Holdings	2.38	2.38	2.36	2.36	20,000
67.5	61	San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	64.5	64	64.5	103,400
84	68	San Miguel Corp. B	73	73	72.5	73	280,800
24	15.75	Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	15.75	16	3,686,900
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.17	1.07	EEI Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	270,000
9.1	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	220,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.76	1.76	2,104,000
		CHEMICALS					
5.9	1.26	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.4	1,342,000
0.95	0.185	Metro Alliance Hold'gs and Eqts. A	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	40,000
0.99	0.25	Metro Alliance Hold'gs and Eqts. B	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.43	0.06	Picop Resources Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.28	3,850,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
4.35	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	584,000
0.0925	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0725	0.075	0.07	0.07	5,600,000
0.59	0.17	APC Group Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.56	13,140,000
0.018	0.006	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	136,000,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,700,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	9.1	9.1	9	9.1	2,217,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.2	768,000
1.04	0.45	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	100,000
2.12	0.83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.08	2.12	2.04	2.08	9,103,000
680	327.5	Ayala Corp.	615	615	595	600	167,180
13.75	7.58	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	140,000
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	298,000
4.45	0.96	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.65	3.7	17,665,000
7.8	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	481,000
6	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,659,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	158,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	265,200
2	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.7	2	1.7	2	170,000
2.5	0.6	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. A	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	20,000
2.5	1	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. B	2.42	2.5	2.42	2.5	130,000
0.88	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	1,000,000
12.5	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	10.5	10.75	1,273,900
3.6	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.2	3,842,000
5.4	1.04	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	25,000
0.48	0.155	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	4,230,000
1.7	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	71,000
407.5	205	SM Investments Corp.	357.5	357.5	355	357.5	110,500
0.51	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	19,100,000
0.85	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.73	0.73	120,000
1.34	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	610,000
0.41	0.05	Uniol Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	350,000
0.24	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	1,000,000
0.55	0.15	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.4	0.35	0.4	470,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Company Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	85,000
0.58	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.45	450,000
18.5	10.25	Ayala Land Inc.	18.25	18.25	17.5	17.5	8,253,600
1.72	0.95	Belle Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.32	1,726,000
3.1	1.18	C and P Homes Inc.	2.42	2.6	2.34	2.34	915,000
4.5	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.4	325,000
0.54	0.24	Crown Equities Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	40,000
0.54	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.47	0.47	3,730,000
1.94	0.64	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	500,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.76	0.76	23,170,000
0.165	0.027	Ever Gotesco Ress and Hold'gs Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	5,400,000
1.12	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.74	0.74	1,650,000
2.04	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.76	1.78	21,390,000
0.33	0.05	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	300,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	26,400,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	10,000,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	2,570,000
0.99	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.69	850,000
3.95	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.25	3.25	33,886,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.55	318,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	2,400,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	4,613,000
5.6	1.48	SM Development Corp.	4.9	5.6	4.9	5.4	6,219,000
13	6.9	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.25	11.5	5,781,600
0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.66	0.65	0.64	0.64	1,020,000
0.27	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.2	1,290,000
29	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	204,300
1.2	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	5,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.05	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.66	1.68	5,119,000
1,445	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,235	1,235	1,230	1,230	31,060
2,820	1,700	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,550	2,555	2,535	2,540	227,160
7.9	3	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.7	2,437,000
0.39	0.155	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	2,200,000
6.8	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	6.2	6.8	6	6.1	1,343,000
7.1	2	IPVG Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	375,000
0.075	0.046	ISM Communications Corp.	0.0625	0.065	0.0625	0.065	7,300,000
0.033	0.011	Imperial Resources Inc. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,000,000
2.9	1.36	Ionics Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	20,000
0.0675	0.038	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	4,100,000
0.08	0.025	PhilWeb Com Inc.	0.046	0.047	0.046	0.047	43,700,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	50,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
5.6	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.2	5.5	5.2	5.4	612,000
32	11.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28.5	28.5	28	28	1,348,300
1.7	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.36	1.7	1.36	1.7	1,046,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.8	3.8	1,945,000
0.45	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	2,000,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.88	0.89	0.87	0.87	2,810,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	36,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
4.35	1.84	Macroasia Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.05	917,000
16	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	15.5	15.5	14.75	14.75	3,915,500
30	9.5	Paxys Inc.	27.5	29	27.5	29	620,000
50	22	Prime Gaming Philippines Inc.	49.5	50	49.5	50	17,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	50,700,000
7.6	2.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	372,000
7.7	2.55	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	217,000
18.5	5.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	18	18	17.5	17.5	2,870,400
14.75	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	10,300
1.91	0.0602	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.86	1.88	1.82	1.84	12,147,000
0.42	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.31	39,570,000
0.47	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	14,670,000
0.035	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.032	0.035	0.032	0.033	1,609,300,000
0.039	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.035	0.037	0.035	0.037	888,800,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.02	863,200,000
5.9	2.65	Philex Mining Corp.	5.2	5.2	5	5.1	10,238,000
32	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26	26	26	34,600
0.87	0.25	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	70,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	1,551,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.41	0.41	4,020,000
0.017	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	20,900,000
14.81	6.31	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	10	10	143,000
0.0182	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	391,700,000

COMPILED BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

CURRENCIES

May 1, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.732332	1.000000	47.5100
Japan	Yen	0.006128	0.008368	0.3976
United Kingdom	Pound	1.463640	1.998600	94.9535
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.093638	0.127863	6.0748
Switzerland	Franc	0.607695	0.829807	39.4241
Canada	Dollar	0.656388	0.896298	42.5831
Singapore	Dollar	0.483069	0.659631	31.3391
Australia	Dollar	0.607594	0.829669	39.4176
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.942630	2.652661	126.0279
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.195278	0.266652	12.6686
Brunei	Dollar	0.481481	0.657462	31.2360
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000081	0.000110	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.022327	0.030488	1.4485
UAE	Dirham	0.199394	0.272272	12.9356
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.365500	64.8749
Korea	Won	0.000788	0.001076	0.0511
China	Yuan**	0.094942	0.129643	6.1593
ArgentinaPeso	0.237001	0.323625	15.3754	
Brazil	REAL	0.360417	0.492150	23.3820
Denmark	Kroner	0.134235	0.183298	8.7085
India	Rupee	0.017954	0.024516	1.1648
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214133	0.292398	13.8918
Mexico	New Peso	0.067062	0.091573	4.3506
New Zealand	Dollar	0.541906	0.739973	35.1561
South Africa	Rand	0.104485	0.142674	6.7784
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022016	0.030063	1.4283

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—April 27, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of April 27, 2007

Gov't spent P175.58B . . .

From page B1

and social services, the government also borrows to pay old and maturing debts.

The government's outstanding debt, which stood at P3.87 trillion as of end-January, was a result of huge budget deficits in the past that forced authorities to borrow heavily.

The deficit began growing after the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which trimmed down corporate earnings and cut tax collections in the process.

Stradcom gets SEC nod to issue bonds worth ₱1.6B

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE SECURITIES AND EXchange Commission has approved Stradcom Corp.'s proposal to issue P1.6 billion in asset-backed bonds after the company secured a favorable credit rating.

Stradcom is a project firm tasked to develop and operate information technology facilities for driver licensing and motor vehicle registration transactions of the Land Transportation Office.

Stradcom will raise P1.6 billion via a special purpose trust company that will issue the asset-backed bonds.

The bonds were assigned a PRS Aa rating by Philippine Ratings Services Corp.

This transaction is the first to be carried out under the Securitization Act of 2004, which sought to promote the development of the capital market by supporting the sale of assets to a special purpose entity and the issuance of asset-backed securities (ABS) by the SPE.

The rating "PRS Aa" is the second highest that can be given by PhilRatings, differing only by a slight degree from the highest rated corporates. It indicates a firm's capacity to meet its financial commitments relative to that of other Philippine corporate issues.

PhilRatings is the sole domestic credit ratings agency that is accredited by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the SEC, with over 20 years' experience in the Philippine financial market.

The bonds represent the securitized computer fee revenues of Stradcom from its build-own-operate (BOO) contract with the Land Transportation Office. The contract was signed in 1998 and implemented in 2003.

Under the contract, which is valid for 10 years or up to 2013, Stradcom will generate monthly computer fee revenue from LTO transactions, which include: motor vehicle registration and driver's license and permits transactions.

The bonds will be issued in three tranches and will raise cash to refinance Stradcom's debts, fund working capital requirements, pay for issuance costs, and create a P150 million sinking fund to protect bondholders.

Stradcom is a private firm owned by Stradcom International Holdings Inc. (SIHI), a holding firm indirectly owned by Strategic Alliance Development Corp. (Stradec), Comfac Corp. through United Information Technologies Inc. and Cezar Quiambao.

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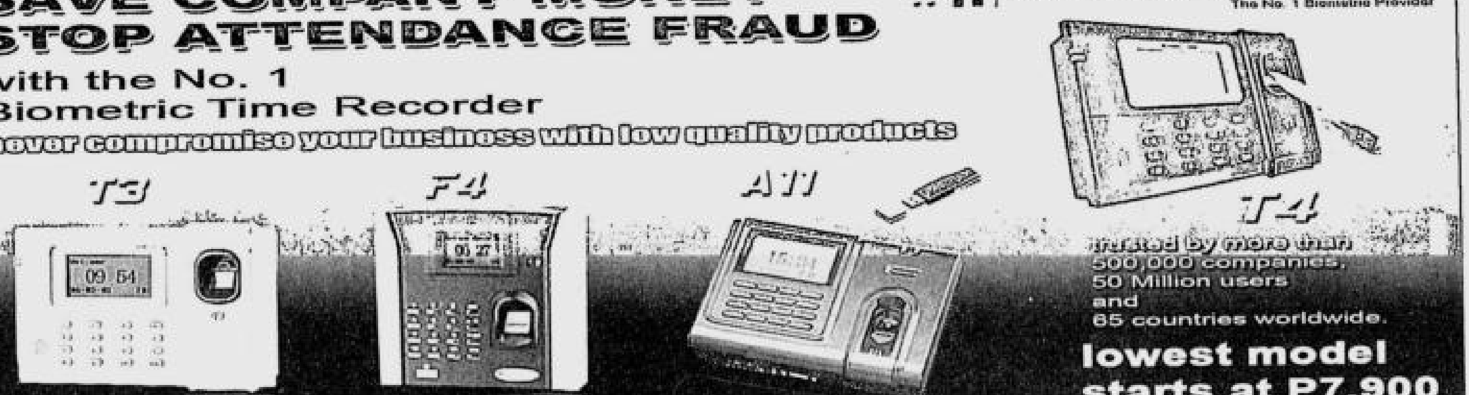

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Universal Motors Corporation unveils the latest in their line of Frontier pickup trucks, the Nissan Frontier Bravado. The Nissan Frontier Bravado fuses affordability and functionality. A rugged hauler stocked with creature comforts and aesthetic features you'd find on luxury models. Especially made for those who want the power of a truck with a price that costs less than a sedan. Perfect for entrepreneurs who demand tenability for their business or individuals investing on an entry level vehicle.

The Bravado offers attractive features such as keyless entry system for convenience, appealing design details such as fog lamps, fabric seats, improved tires/alloy wheels and full rear bumper. All loaded with the dependable strength and legendary reliability of the Frontier.

Whether business or pleasure, the Frontier Bravado is up for the challenge. Backed by the testament of the Frontier long haul virtue, it truly is the new *Muscle ng Pilipino.*

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Double-digit increase in VAT collection seen

BIR expects to post 26% growth

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE EXPECTS a double-digit growth in its value-added tax collection this year in view of the increase in the number of registered businesses and the implementation of tighter auditing.

According to simulations by the agency, VAT collections this year could hit P177.7 billion, up 26 percent from P141 billion last year.

This was based on the 875,783 VAT-registered taxpayers, which were more than last year's 666,362.

Of the total, 529,512 represented individual VAT-registered taxpayers while 346,271 were businesses.

VAT accounts for the biggest portion of the BIR's total tax collection. The VAT is a form of sales tax on goods and services that can be passed on to end-users.

The BIR is pinning its hopes on the rise in its VAT collection to help meet its collection target for this year of over P780 billion, or 16 percent higher than last year's target of P675 billion.

The projected 26-percent rise in VAT collection is hoped to make up for the measly 5-percent rise in income tax collection expected for 2007.

The BIR expects income tax collection this year to hit P130.556 billion, 5 percent higher than the P123.889 billion in 2006.

The agency is hard-pressed to meet its tax collection target to ensure that the government's budget deficit will remain within this year's ceiling.

In the first quarter, however, the government exceeded its budget deficit limit of P45.8 billion, with the budget gap hitting P52 billion. This was largely blamed on shortfalls in tax collection.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, however, earlier said the BIR would implement several measures to improve tax collection and that the government would also look for other revenue sources, including sale of state-owned assets.

The government wants to reduce its budget deficit to only P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion to be on its way to a balanced budget by next year.

The goal of attaining a balanced budget by 2008, however, is challenged by shortfalls in tax collection and the need to spend more for infrastructure and social services.

One of these measures is the intensification of the BIR's benchmarking method. Under this tax-auditing scheme, the BIR uses a benchmark on the percentage share of tax collection over gross income earned by corporate taxpayers.

Each industry has its own benchmark. Taxpayers that will pay taxes that are much lower than the benchmarks would be subject to investigation.

The elderly vote

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

IN THE CURRENT POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, party strategists have targeted such voting blocs as the youth, the women and labor. Incredibly, they have omitted the senior citizen or, as I prefer to call them, the elderly (at least 60 years of age).

Not too long ago, the non-life insurance industry expanded its market by offering policies especially designed for the elderly. It used to be, if you were over 60, you could no longer buy an accident or medical insurance policy. Today, that threshold has been pushed forward. There are now policies you can buy even if you are 70, and the policies are in force up to age 85.

In the First World, politicians would not dare ignore the elderly. How can politicians in the US ignore the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) with a membership of over 30 million spread from coast to coast and beyond?

In the Philippines, political strategists have taken the elderly for granted. They do not seem to see the tremendous clout of the elderly. If properly harnessed, the elderly vote can make or unmake any candidate.

Fifteen percent of the population is elderly. That is about 12 million souls, or over 25 percent of registered voters. And, when we consider the influence of the grandparents on the voting preferences of the immediate and extended family, the command vote of the elderly is considerable.

For example, I will advise (this has the force of a command) my personal voting bloc, which includes five grandchildren and my office staff, whom to vote for on May 14. My family does not always do what I want, but during elections, they toe my line, if only to keep the old codger quiet. My bloc will whisper, "Let's do what the old man says. *Pagbigyan na natin*."

If my wife were alive today, she would have a stronger say on how the family should vote. This *lola* vote stems from the fact that the Filipino family is more matriarchal than patriarchal in character.

Without going into an extensive survey, and judging only from the crowd I move around with, winning the elderly vote is not easy. Living on a pension, and in a house long fully paid for, the elderly is financially independent. As a result, his vote is not for sale.

Already set in his ways, the elderly is fiercely independent in his political views. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks: So, having been ignored, how should the elderly vote?

From the senatorial lineup, the first choice should be Joker Arroyo. At 81, he knows the problems of the elderly.

If you are voting in Parañaque, you should vote for Ed Zialcita, the author of the Expanded Senior Citizens Law, which did away with the degrading begging bowl called the Senior Citizens Card.

In Makati, Jojo Binay has had a long-standing program for the elderly (free movie tickets, and birthday cakes).

Sonny Belmonte in Quezon City is an elderly himself and takes good care of the senior citizens in his bailiwick.

In Manila, I recommend Sen. Alfredo Lim. Just looking at him, how can an elderly not vote for him?

In the provinces, the elderly should vote for the candidates who have at least shown respect for their elders.

Finally, in making the choice in the party-list system, the elderly, for the sake of the future of the grandchildren, SHOULD NOT VOTE, repeat SHOULD NOT VOTE, for ANY of the following communist parties: Bayan Muna, Anak Pawis, Akbayan, Gabriela, Partido ng Manggagawa and Migrante.

Arise, fellow elderlies! Let us show the politicians that they cannot ignore us and get away with it!

OBITUARIES

EMETERIO CAPISTRANO ROA, JR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 30, 2007.

He is once again with his beloved Maria.

His bereaved children, **Butch, Candy & Larry Jalbuena, Dix & Beulah, Jimmy & Katrina, Chuck & Charina**; loving grandchildren, **Katrice, Michael, Mavis, Trisha, Andie, Paulina, Sandra, Paolo, Monica & Bea** request the pious readers to join them in prayers for his eternal happiness.

His remains lie in state at Mabini & Bonifacio Chapels, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park), Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment is on Friday, May 4, 2007 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after a 9:00 A.M. Mass.

We Remember with Deep Affection

1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

CARMEN MARIÑO PEREZ

December 21, 1920 – May 2, 2006

Her husband, **Ernesto Arriola Perez** and daughters **Malou Perez, Marites Perez-Lee** and **Mary Ann Perez-Scullion** thank all those who continue to remember Carmen's loving and caring nature and her Christian values.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

OUR BELOVED "CHOL"

SOLEDAD LLIGE RAQUEL

Peacefully joined her Creator,
her husband Ñing and son Tony
on April 30, 2007.

Her only daughter, **Josie Burki**, son-in-law **Peter**, grandchildren, **Lisa** and **Dani**, grandson-in-law, **Marc**, daughter-in-law, **Ine**, sisters, brothers, in-laws, other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her family will receive relatives and friends at 32 M. Salvador Street, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Her remains will be brought to rest at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina on Saturday, May 5 after the Mass at the Pinaglaban Church (St. John the Baptist).

Mauro M. Magboo

Retiree of Manufacturing, United Laboratories, Inc.

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 30, 2007 at the age of 72.

His body lies in state at Arlington, Raymundo Ave, Pasig City. Interment to be announced later.

"Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to me."
(Psalm 116:7)

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Caught in motorcycle frenzy

By Charles E. Buban

IT'S REMARKABLY EASY TO get caught in motorcycle frenzy whenever there's an event like the recently concluded MotoFiesta road show held at The Expo Centro in Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City.

The two-day event virtually transformed the venue into a sea of motorcycles as various motorcycle groups and enthusiasts converged to view the latest motorcycle models, show bikes, accessories and riding gears, buy items or just enjoy the different presentations.

"There will always be a great deal of interest on motorcycles considering they are vital means of transportation for millions of Filipinos. Nationwide, motorcycles constitute 42 percent of the total registered motor vehicles," said Lester Dizon, editor in chief of MotorCycle magazine, which organized the event.

He added that there are now 2.5 million registered motorcycles in the country citing a recent Land Transportation Office data.

Latest lineup

The country's leading motorcycle manufacturers and distributors—Norkis-Yamaha, Suzuki Philippines, Kawasaki Motors Philippines, Eastworld Motor Industries (Motorstar) and Access Plus (Ducati and KTM)—presented their latest lineup as well as offered special terms to buyers at the MotoFiesta.

Several imported bikes were also presented courtesy of United Excelsior while Castrol's lady models paraded around the venue to introduce the company's technically advanced synthetic motor oil and specialty lubricants.

Aside from motorcycles, the event also showcased accessories and riding gears from exhibitors that included J2Cab, MS Motosuit, Motor Cycle Gear (MCG), RTN, Dan's Bike Shop, Imarflex, YRS, MTRT/Hyper-RPM, Starmaster, Full Throttle, Soundex Blade mufflers, Chrome Dazzler, Smart eBikes, Fury eye wear and Motoworld (which showcased their collection of Givi hard saddle bags).

Product launches

Also during the event, Tiger Thailand Motorcycles Philippines launched its latest line of motorcycles including the Smart 135S, Cycle Cross 135 and Boxer 200ST models while Blaze Motortech Corp. introduced its 110 cc Blaze Hybrid Underbone Scooter (Hubs 110).

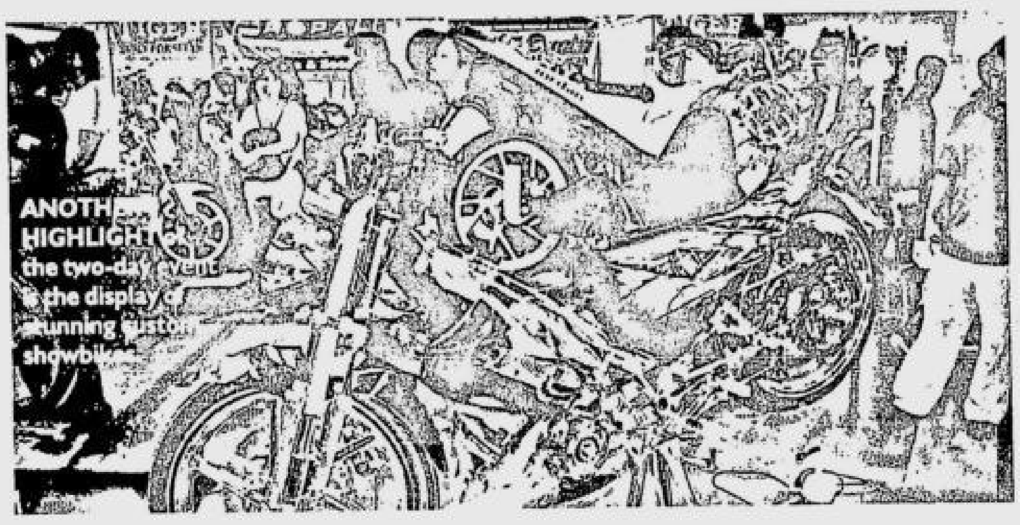
Teen racer Maico Buncio also chose the event to launch his campaign to join the 600 cc Superbike 2007 Series using the Yamaha-YRS-Imarflex R6 race bike while his sponsor, Imarflex VP Jim Ng, demonstrated the capabilities of his company's high-performance batteries.

"What happened in Cubao is just the beginning as we lined up similar MotoFiesta road shows in key provincial cities such as Dagupan, Cebu, Davao and Vigan," informed Dizon who organized the event.

Last month's event was officially opened by Land Transportation Office chief Reynaldo Berroya, who is also an avid biker and the current president of the Luzon Motorcyclists Federation Inc.

Berroya was joined by Motorcycle Philippines Federation directors Jojo Medina, King Dayrit and Atoy Sta. Cruz; Edwin Go, president of Motorcycle Dealers Association; Benedict Arriola of Suzuki Philippines and marketing committee chair of Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association; and Ager Kiocho, president of Two-wheel Enthusiasts Network Inc.

WITH HIS Yamaha-YRS-Imarflex R6, teen racer Maico Buncio (left) chose the MotoFiesta event to launch his campaign to join the 600cc Superbike 2007 Series (Lester Dizon and guest Jennifer Lee joined him on stage).



ANOTH HIGHLIGH the two-day event is the display of stunning custom showbik

Seating arrangements

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IN ENGLAND, THE SOCIAL class to which a Briton belongs is revealed, among other things, by the seating arrangement in a car. A recent article in the International Herald Tribune quotes The Daily Telegraph's Andrew Baxter as writing, "A couple taking another couple out for a drive would sit themselves thus. Working class, men in the front. Middle class, man with his own partner in the front. Upper class, man with the other partner in the front."

Of course, motoring etiquette observed in the United Kingdom does not apply in Manila, but it does bring to mind the seating arrangement followed here. In this country, the macho (or "working class"?) custom prevails as men usually sit in front and women in the back.

When there is a chauffeur at the wheel and the person hitching a ride is female, she is expected to ride in the back with the other girls—or women, matrons or grannies as the case may be—while a male passenger gets the front seat. Being a motoring columnist interested in how a car performs, I often break this tradition by insisting on the front seat.

Back seat

The only time I took a back seat was during a trip in a rented minivan from San Francisco to Las Vegas some years ago with two Filipino couples, a baby and the baby's *yaya*. The men announced at the outset that they would take turns driving since they knew the way to Las Vegas and I did not. How very chauvinistic and condescending!

Sitting in front on a long trip has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that you are spared a harsh, bouncy ride if the vehicle in use has the chassis and suspension of a pickup truck or light commercial vehicle. Going back to Metro Manila from Subic, I once rode in a friend's big luxury SUV, a best-selling Japanese marque. The ride was comfortable enough during the segment of the trip when I was in the front seat but when I took the back seat, I found out why my friend told me to sit in front while she and another person sat in the back. But I believe that the subsequent iteration of this SUV brand provides better ride quality.

The disadvantage of taking the front seat is that you cannot chat with people sitting in the back without straining your neck. You tend to miss the jokes and the long stories. I remember on a night trip to Subic with four other media friends in a chauffeured minivan, I was sitting in front and couldn't catch all the wisecracks that one of them was making. A born raconteur and incurable romantic, she even narrated the story of the great love of her life which I failed to hear. When I asked her about it later, she replied, "Shakespeare never repeats."

Disadvantage

Another disadvantage—if the vehicle is equipped with a DVD/VCD/CD tuner, remote control and front headrest-mounted LCD monitors—is that you can't enjoy the entertainment system to full advantage when you are in the front seat. You can't watch a DVD or VCD movie during a long haul unless you have eyes in the back of your head.

For company presidents and other high-ranking executives, riding shotgun enhances one's macho image. I remember that when I was employed at Ayala and Enrique Zobel was the CEO, he was usually seen in the front seat when his Mercedes arrived or left the parking basement of the Makati Stock Exchange building. It was just like the late EZ who was an active rancher and polo player before his accident.

Prima donna

Rather than sit in the back like a prima donna, a few woman execs prefer to sit in front. They have no qualms about sitting beside the driver, who among the snooty set is considered hired help. When she was director-general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), Winnie Monsod would be seen in the front seat of the Neda car taking her to appointments outside her office. This seating arrangement gave her a hands-on, iconoclastic aura—attitude, as they call it these days.

The only thing better than sitting in the front seat is driving the car yourself, if and when this is possible. The pleasure of driving is the main reason I have never hired a driver. As a young married woman, even when I was pregnant, I continued driving up to the eighth or ninth month. None of us is getting any younger and most of my contemporaries have given up driving because of the horrendous traffic jams and air pollution, but I will go on driving. The driver's seat is still the best seat in a car with the front seat a distant second and the back seat for car illiterates.

***

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: It's not hard to meet expenses, they're everywhere.

Where are the hybrids?

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

OVER THE LAST FIVE MONTHS, I'VE HAD exactly five hybrid car sightings, something rarer than rain in the dry season these days. The question always comes up, when staring one of these vehicles straight in the headlights, "Why aren't these cars in the local market already?" My mind is then swamped with theories and even more questions; the headaches begin to start in earnest at this point.

The first true hurdle that hybrids must overcome is the fact that these are expensive cars. In the United States, a major market for these gasoline-electric cars, there is an average premium of $3,000 (approximately P140,000) for hybrid vehicles versus similar vehicles powered solely by an internal combustion engine.

Environmental incentive

This substantial increase in unit cost is deferred in the States by a rebate issued by the Federal government. Based on several factors, the cash back from the government ranges from a scant $200 for a hybrid truck or SUV to something like $3,000 for a subcompact. If a consumer chooses the right car, the rebate practically negates the retail pricing premium mentioned earlier. Customers can practically enjoy fuel cost savings once they drive their tree-hugging cars out of the showroom.

The trouble is that there is very little chance that the same environmental incentive can be extended by our government. There is really no need to expound why this is the sad case; I'd rather not have to spell out the obvious and risk being labeled as libelous. This is just a motoring column after all.

The increased pricing will therefore have to be passed on to the consumer and this will be something that will likely be a geometrically expounded price factor. Why is that the case? First of all, there are the usual import taxes that must be paid on all goods brought into the country. Duties are higher too for cars assembled outside of the Asean region and from the last time I checked, none of our neighbors produce hybrid cars.

Special assessment

I'd like to bet a week's worth of beer money that there will be a special assessment for hybrids as they technically come with two engines and not just one. Leave it to the bureaucracy to find some way of pricing hybrid cars way out of the pockets of the Filipino motorist. Maybe they'll tax it as both a car and a generator, who knows?

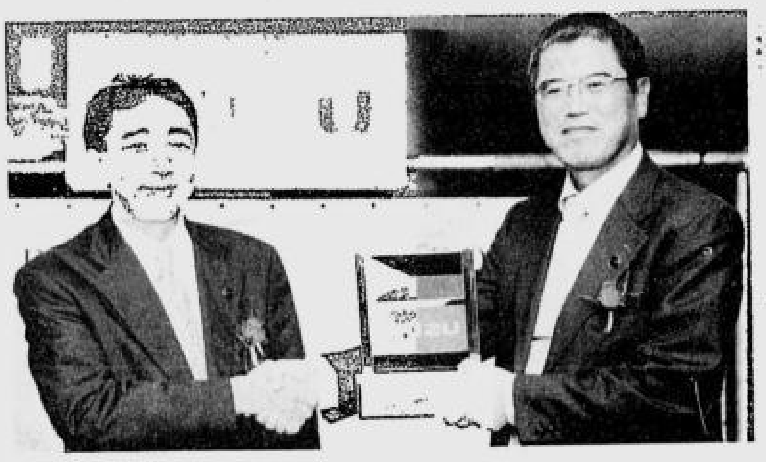
There is a lot of worry too about the cost of owning and running cars that have an internal combustion engine, an electric motor and a lithium ion battery the size of a single mattress. The manufacturers have kept mum about the extra costs. Consumers on the other hand are really worried. To combat the public perception that the new technology behind hybrid cars will still have teething issues, many brands extend an 8- to 10-year standard warranty on the critical parts of these dual power cars.

Again, this is something that we might not see here in the Philippines. Not only would an 8- to 10-year warranty commitment be financially disastrous for any vehicle manufacturer, but the mere climate and weather of our country could spell trouble for hybrids and make such factory assurances impossible.

Meteorological factors

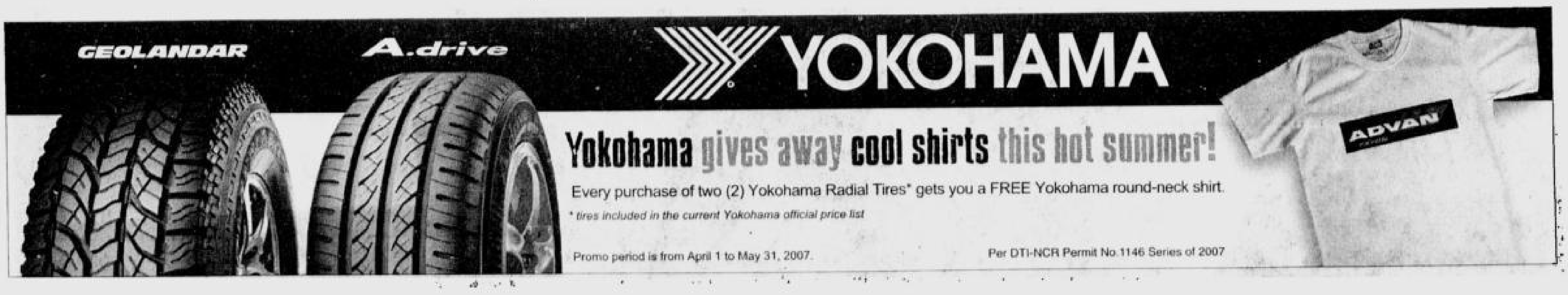
Two simple meteorological factors—the intense heat and the appalling humidity—could be the real barriers why hybrids are not showroom available yet. The image of melted wires and water-logged batteries may be exaggerated, but you get the picture. Though seriously, if the electronics on even some high-end European cars can't take the tropical summer heat, there is a distinct possibility that long-term ownership of a hybrid will also require a long-term relationship with a competent electrician.

In the end, the only people who can explain with any authority as to the scarcity of hybrids in the Philippines are the manufacturers themselves. Trying to personally explain the delays and the possible reasons behind these will frustrate even the most patient of us. So if there are any vehicle manufacturers out there with hybrids in their inventories reading this, then all we ask for is a clear, concise explanation. Are the hybrids coming or not?



CEREMONIAL TURNOVER

New Isuzu Philippines Corp. president Keiji Takeda (right) receives the symbolic Philippine and Isuzu flags from outgoing IPC president Yoshifumi Komura during the recent ceremonial turnover held at the Jumbo Kingdom Restaurant in Manila.



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eTelecare wraps up initial public offer in Nasdaq

By Ronnel W. Domingo

QUEZON CITY-BASED eTELECARE Global Solutions Inc. announced that it has completed an initial public offering of 5.5 million American Depository Shares through the Nasdaq Stock Exchange in the United States, which it said would guarantee the firm's continued growth.

eTelecare, a provider of call center services, with facilities in the US and the Philippines, joined the Nasdaq on March 28, offering $13.50 a share for a total of $74.25 million.

Also, the firm reported a 28-percent rise in revenue last year to $195 million.

John Harris, company president and chief executive, said that, by going public, the firm would be generating capital, which eTelecare would use to expand its delivery capabilities, as well as pay off some outstanding debt.

"Our success validates our business model of providing high-quality, complex, multi-shore outsourcing to meet our clients' diverse needs," Harris said.

Put up in 1999, eTelecare delivers customer care, technical support and sales capabilities for market-leading companies in major industries, such as telecommunications, high technology, financial services, and travel.

The following year, the firm started developing one of the first outsourced delivery centers in the Philippines for US customers. It said the country's "highly educated, English-speaking labor pool, well-suited for complex, voice-based business," is key to their success.

Seven out of 10, or about 7,000, eTelecare employees are based in the Philippines. The rest are in the US, working for clients some of whom are mainstays in the Fortune 100 list.

Industries urged to manage power consumption

By Abigail L. Ho

TO PREVENT A POWER SUPPLY SHORTFALL, even on days of sweltering heat, power users, particularly those using huge amounts of it, are urged to better manage their consumption.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said that balancing power supply with demand is not just a matter of producing enough power to meet system requirements. Managing how generated power is used is also important.

"Which is why we're pushing industries to do (demand-side management)," he said. "They have the biggest potential to shift their power-intensive activities to off-peak hours."

At present, many industries perform power-intensive activities all at the same time, owing to similar work schedules that their workers keep. This has skewed the demand curve, making power use inefficient, Lotilla explained.

Load shifting to other hours should help normalize the demand curve and allow power plants to operate more efficiently and cost effectively.

Under the National Power Corp.'s time-of-use scheme, customers are provided with flexible hourly rates that are lowest during off-peak hours, or between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., and highest during peak hours, or from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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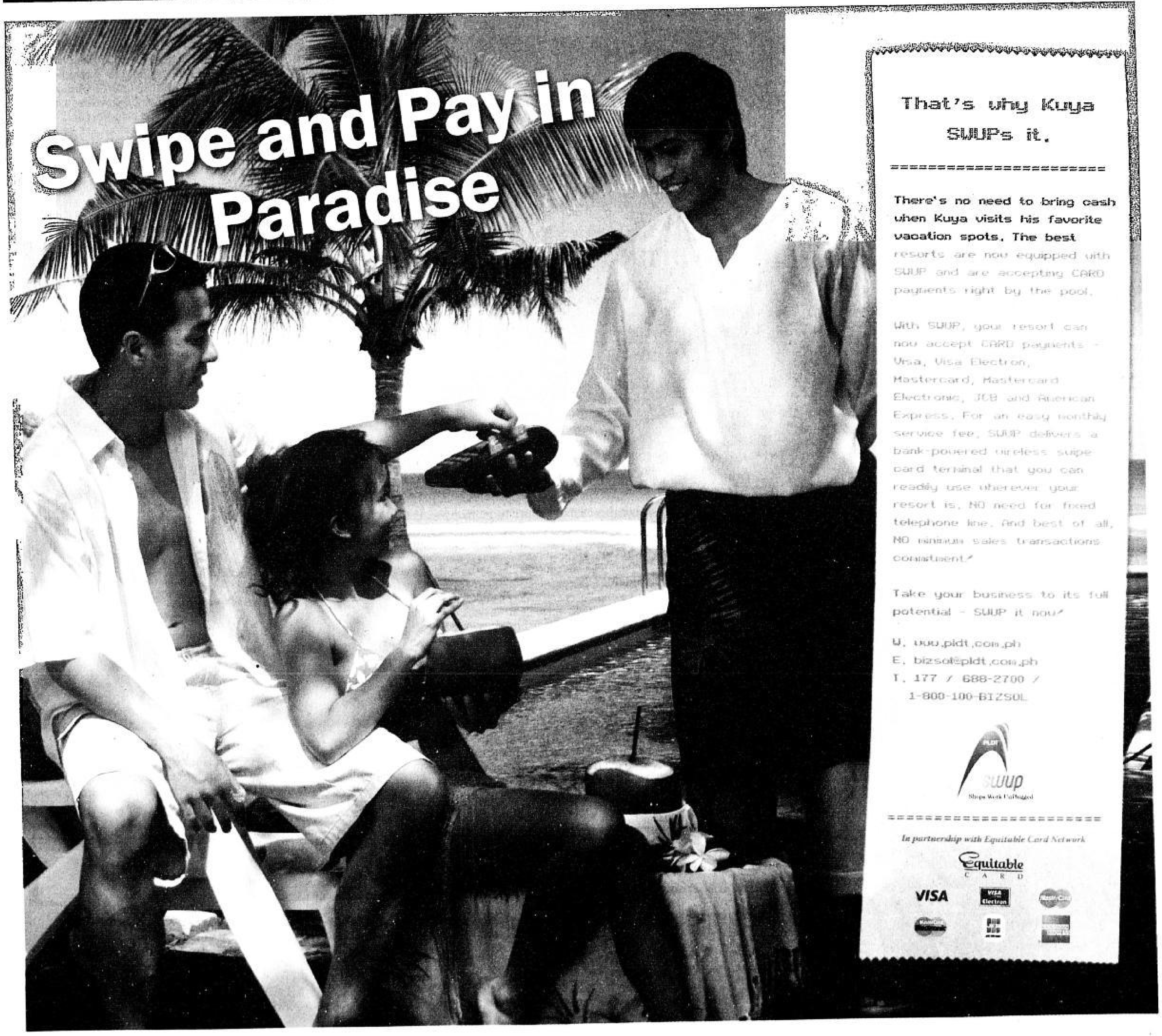
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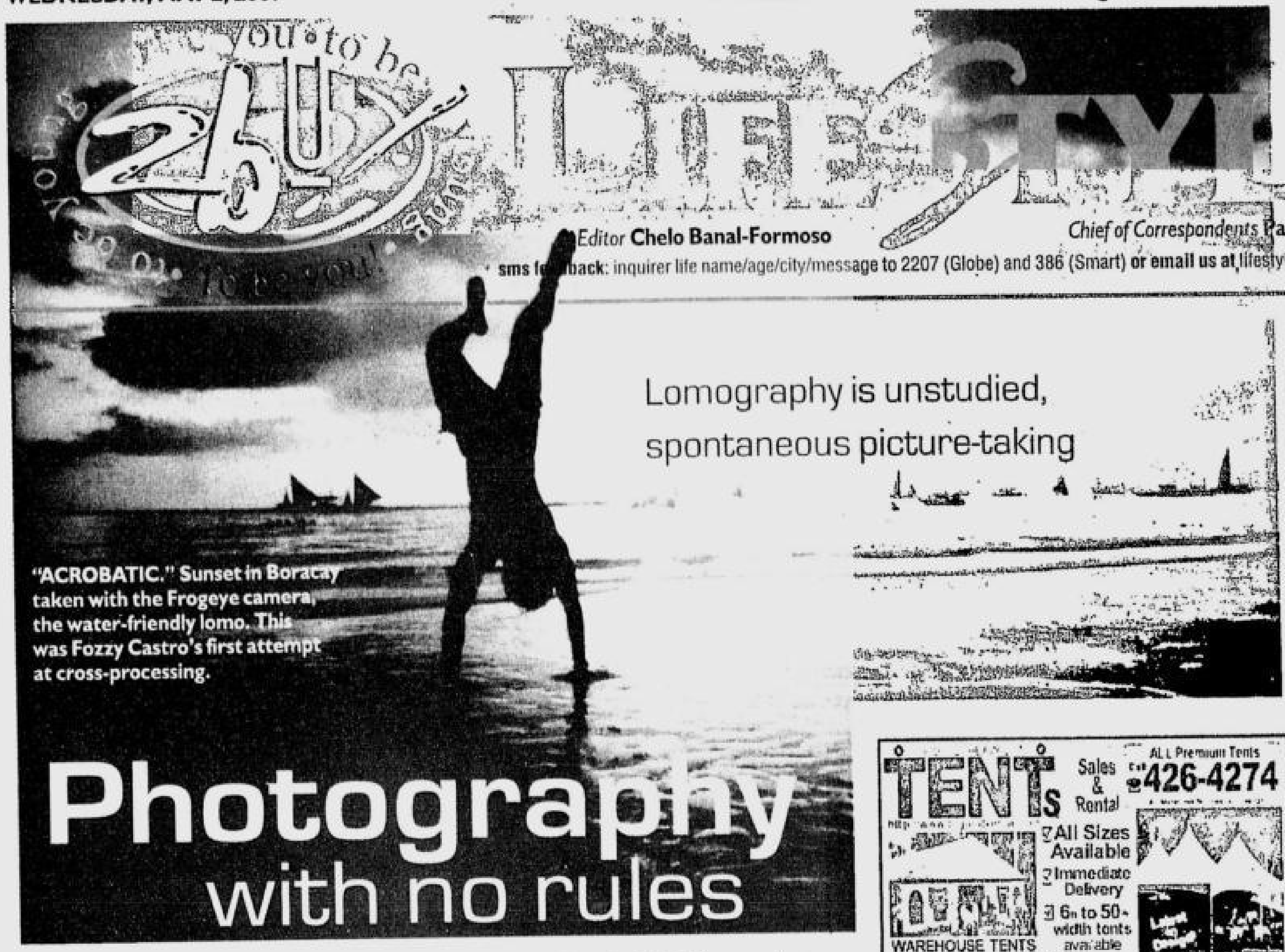


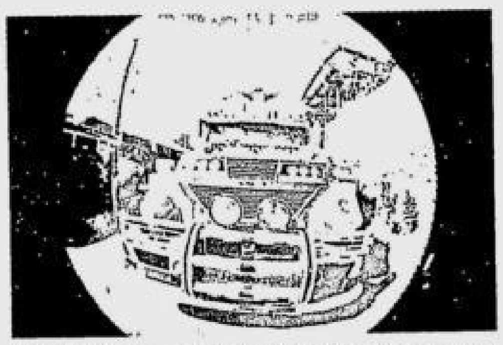
"ACROBATIC." Sunset in Boracay taken with the Frogeye camera, the water-friendly lomo. This was Fozzy Castro's first attempt at cross-processing.

Lomography is unstudied, spontaneous picture-taking

Photography with no rules

By Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

"DON'T THINK, JUST SHOOT," said photographer and Lomomanila founder At Maculangan. "When it comes to lomography, the No. 1 rule is to break all the rules of photography."



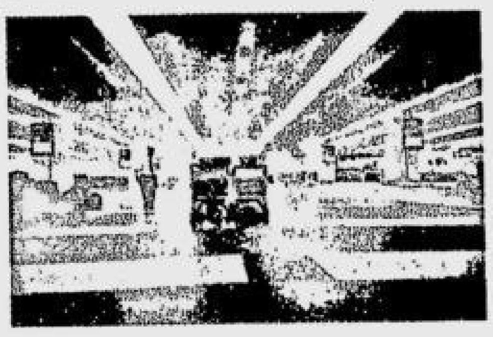
"PINOY Jeepney," by Cary Reyes, taken with fisheye camera

Lomomanila, which initially started out as a mailing list for people who wanted to buy lomo cameras, is a group of professional and amateur photographers who are interested in lomography. "Lomography" is actually a commercial trademark of a camera brand from Austria, although it can also be used to refer to a particular style and approach that photographers use in taking photos.

Lomography emphasizes snapshot photography and shooting from the hip, which encourages photographers to put less focus on formal composition. This approach, Maculangan said, allows more "happy accidents" through experimentation with nontraditional angles and colors.

The cameras lomographers use create interesting results due to multiple lenses, rainbow-colored flashes, optical distortions and, sometimes, even light leaks. This way, photographers are ensured of producing unique shots because of the quirks of their cameras. This can get quite frustrating for beginners who want to attain the dreamlike quality of many of the photos, but for seasoned practitioners, it's all part of the game.

PHOTOGRAPHY/ C2



"ONE of the rules of Lomography is to bring your lomo wherever you go and appreciate daily mundane things. Everything is a work of art. This photo was taken at the Changi International Airport, Singapore," says Castro.

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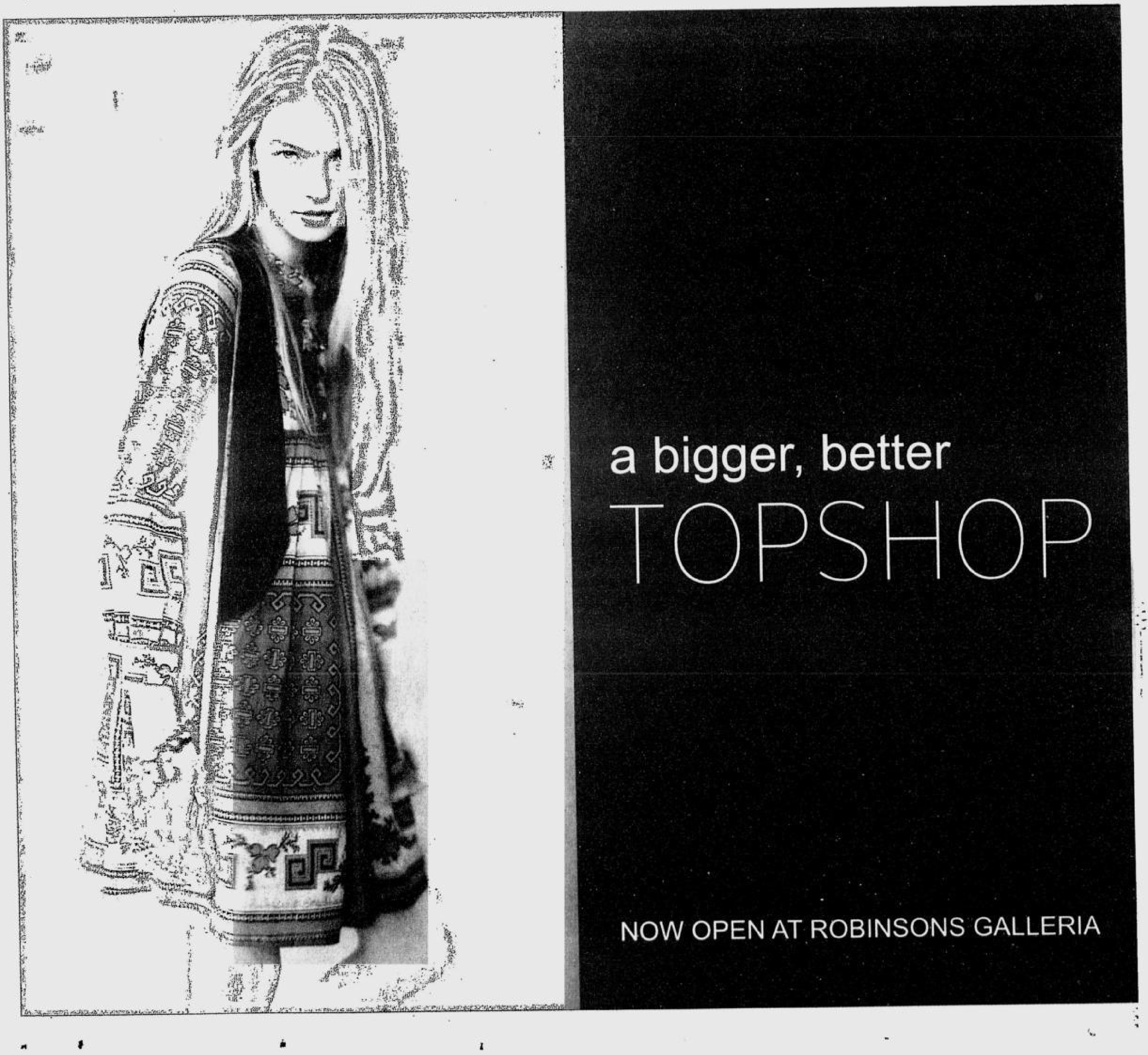
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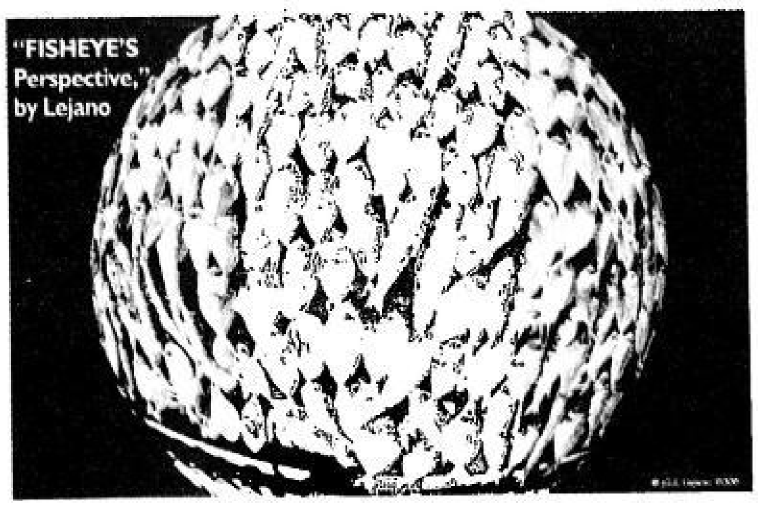
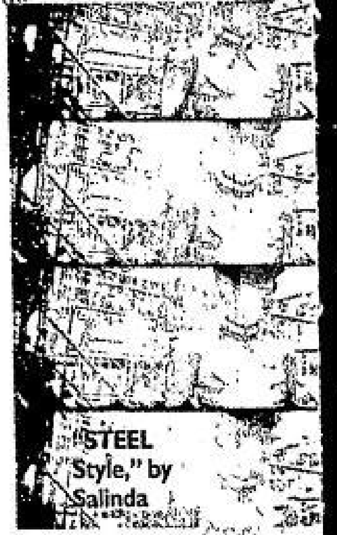
"ANGHELITO," by Jill Lejano

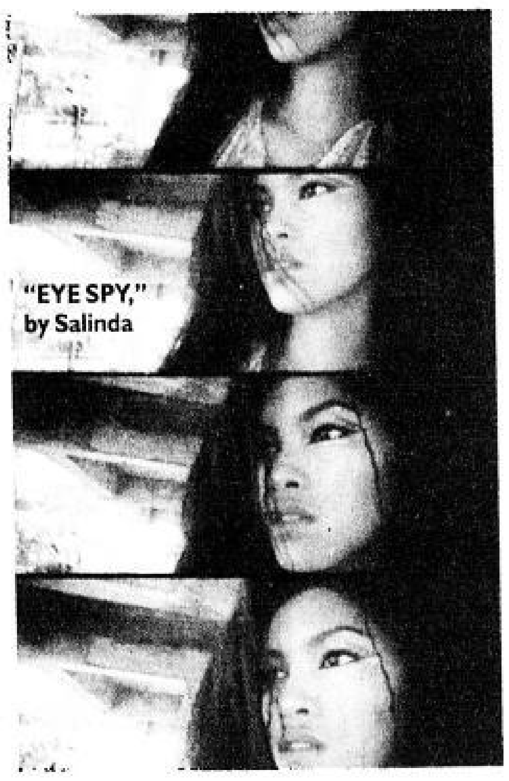

"FISHEYE'S Perspective," by Lejano

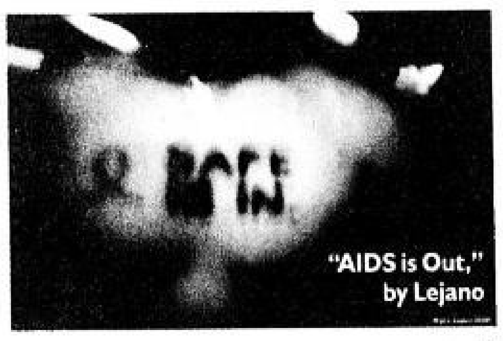
BY SAO

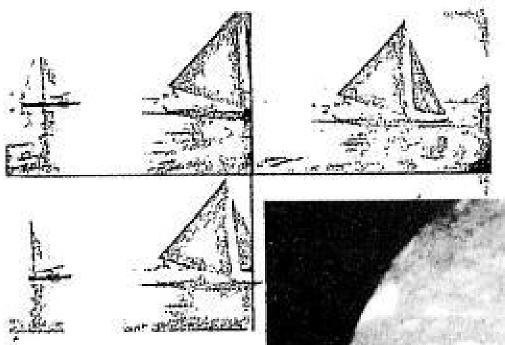

"STEEL Style," by Salinda

Photography with no rules

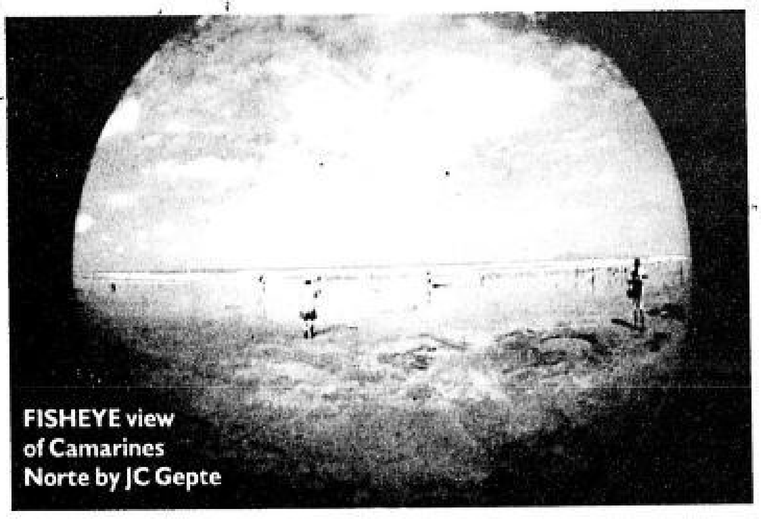
"UMBRELLAS Hanging from a Ceiling," by Jimmy Hilario

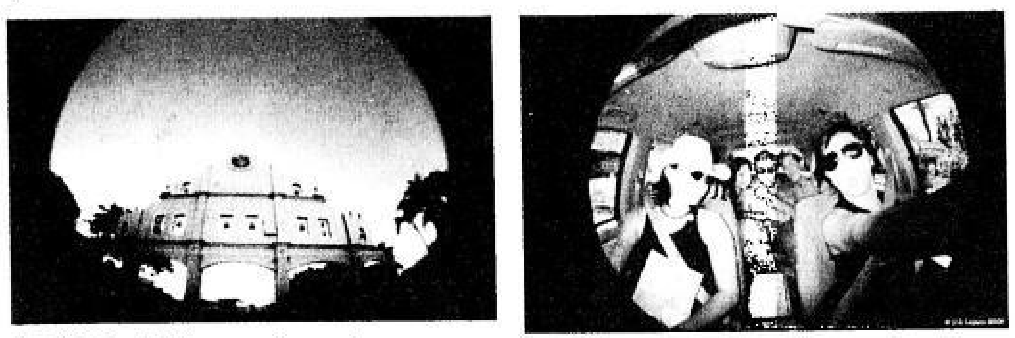

"EYE SPY," by Salinda


"AIDS is Out," by Lejano


"SAILING in Boracay," by Cary Reyes, taken with an Actionsampler

"PABILI," by Chee Kee


FISHEYE view of Camarines Norte by JC Gepte


"RULE No. 1, bring your lomo wherever you go," says Lejano (right photo); "Marikina Mornings," by Eric Buyco

From page C1

Another quality of lomography is the use of bright, saturated colors, faded borders, and multiple exposures. The end result is carefree and spontaneous. Although some photos end up looking as if a trigger-happy 6-year-old took them, some shots are astounding and surreal-looking.

Photographer Jake Verzosa said, "I can't deny that I've always been influenced by the whole concept and look of lomo ever since the day I heard about it."

He added, "While I don't get to shoot with lomo often, the style inevitably seeps into my regular work sometimes. With lomo I use expired slide film, which is processed to give the photos a dreamy feel."

Lifestyle

"Lomography is all about defying structure—it's like introducing a new sound," Maculangan said. "More than a style, lomography promotes a lifestyle."

"Lomomanila's members do include professional photographers, but also visual artists, advertising executives, writers, students, etc.," said Bong Rojales, one of Lomomanila's active members. "We're open to everyone. The group encourages people to break from the confines of formal photography by developing their own style."

Rojales added, "There's no one single statement in lomography. Each person has a reality that he or she wants to represent, which can be expressed through their photos."

He continued, "At first, the employees of the photo centers where we had our film developed were puzzled over our photos—they wanted to adjust the colors, etc. But we told them, don't touch anything. And they've come to realize there is beauty in the weird colors, the unusual angles."

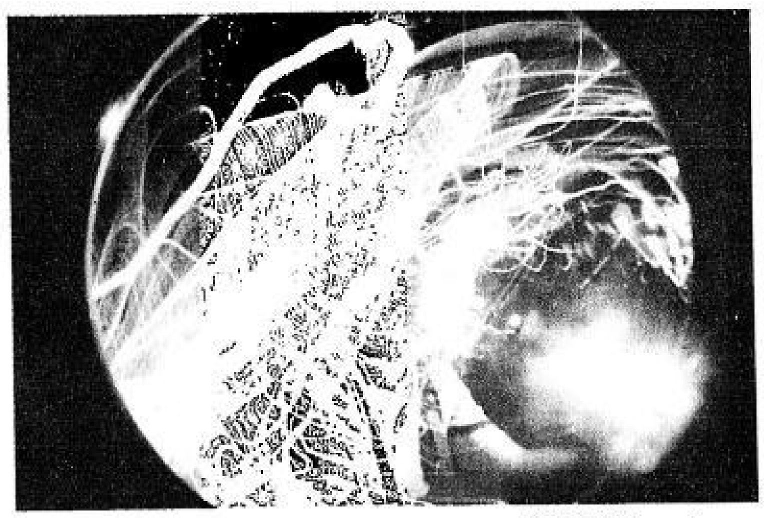
Lomomanila has held several exhibits and events since its conception in 2003, but the group isn't bent on showcasing professional work as its main purpose. "We're here to have fun," Maculangan said. "The group exists to foster camaraderie among our members; we're a weird mix of people who just want to take good photos."

For aspiring lomographers, there's a list of the Ten Golden Rules of Lomography found online, but in the end, only one rule exists: Don't follow any rules. "There are no rules for good photography, only good photographs," said Maculangan. "And this is what we want people to discover."

Check out Lomomanila's Lakbay Lomo exhibit at DPI Gallery in Astoria Plaza the whole month of May. Visit Lomomanila at www.lomomanila.ph.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

SPREADING the lomo love. Some of Lomomanila's members


"LIGHT Show," by Gabriel Chee Kee

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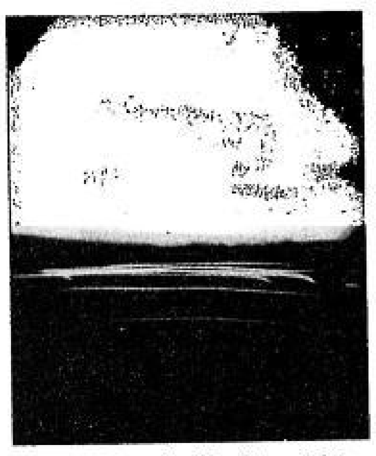
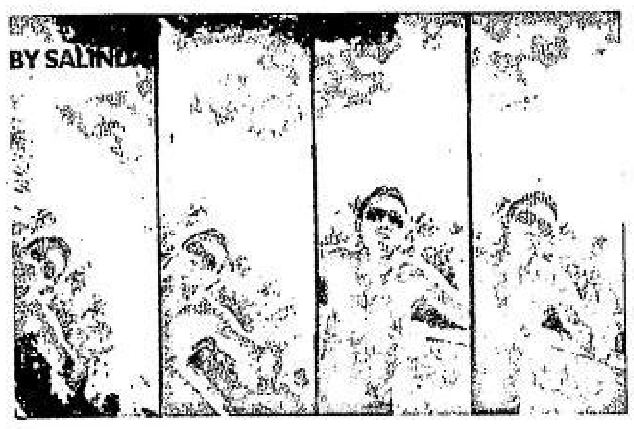
FROM the livingroom holga session by Bong Rojales

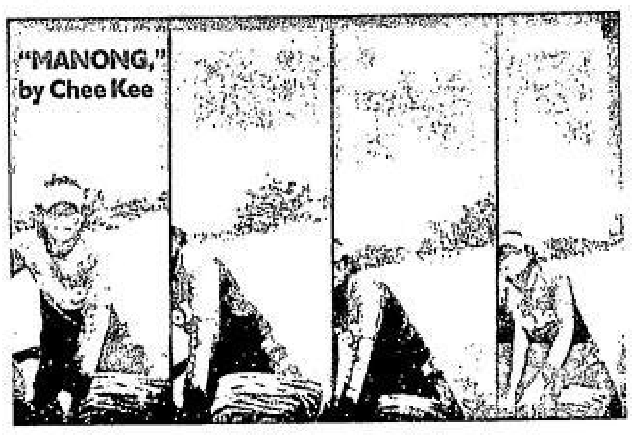
"BATANES," by Rojales

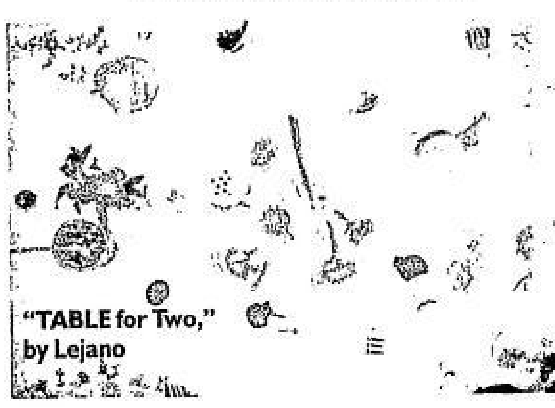

"PONTE Sunrise," by Francis Inton

LOMO can make ordinary grass flowers l
completely different. By Hilario


BY SALIND

"REBULTO," by Gepte


"MANONG," by Chee Kee


"TABLE for Two," by Lejano

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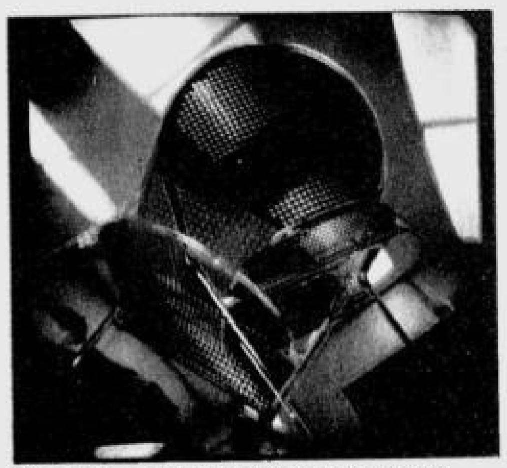
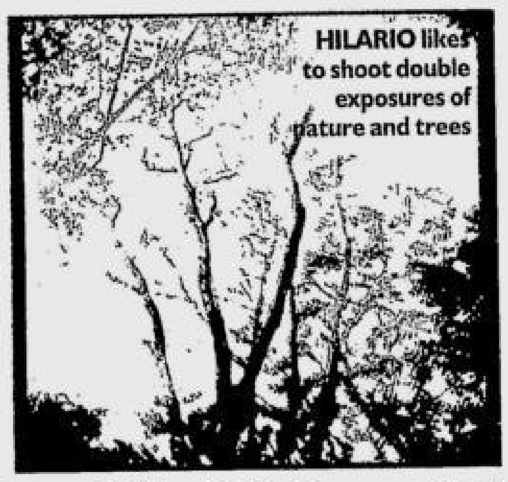
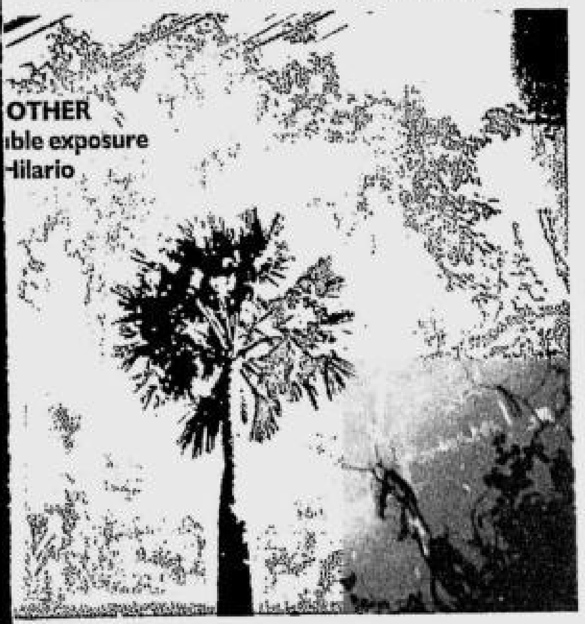


"WHEN you find no appropriate subject matter to shoot and you are itching to shoot just the same, you end up taking pictures of things in the office like this one," says Hilario of this photograph.

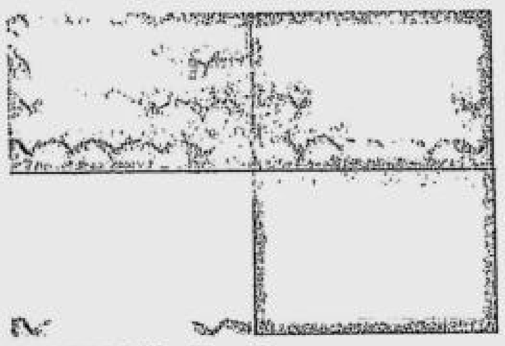


HILARIO likes to shoot double exposures of nature and trees



OTHER
ble exposure
Hilario

"RANGE Life," by Rojales



"KARTON," by Chee Kee

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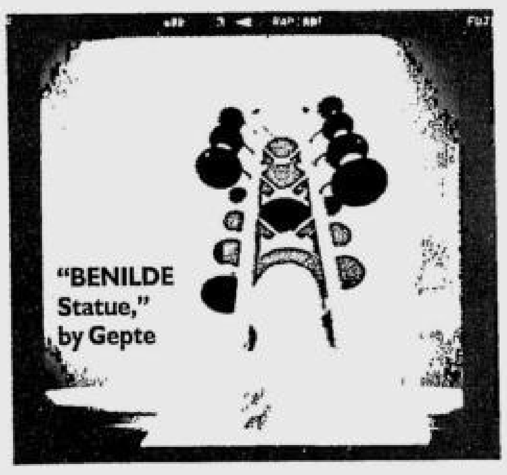

"BENILDE Statue," by Gepte

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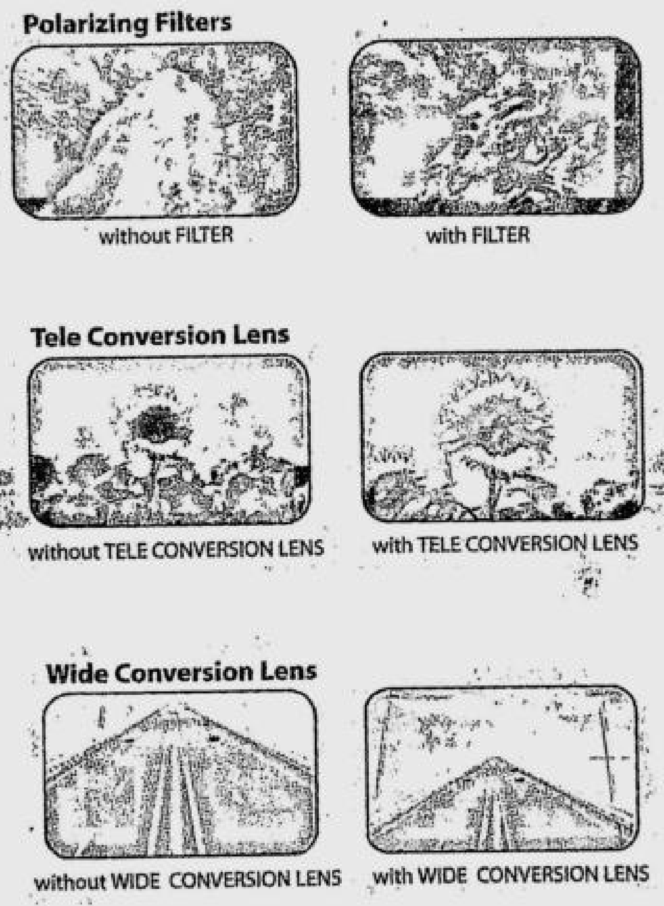

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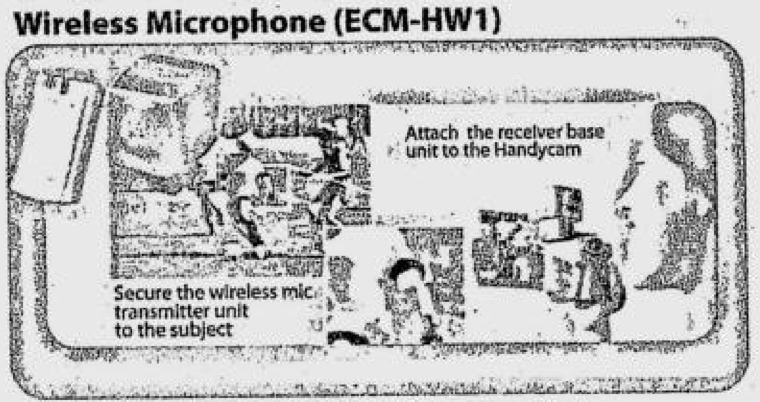

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Attach the receiver base unit to the Handycam
Secure the wireless mic transmitter unit to the subject

Record words and voices clearly from afar with the BLUETOOTH wireless microphone

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Back in black

Spider-man dons a new costume and a sinister look

TWO times the danger, the Venom

By Adrian Dy
2bU! Correspondent

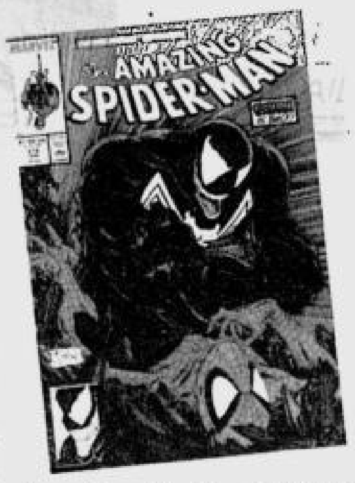
AS "SPIDER-MAN 3" HITS movie theaters, more than a few neophyte Spider-man fans must be gawking at the sleeker, more stylish black costume that the hero sports on all the posters and in the various trailers. Truth be told, though, the black costume is more then 20 years old and has a long, tumultuous history, worn by both hero and villain. What is it exactly? And where did it come from? Read on, true believer!

Secret wars

In 1984, the maxi-series "Secret Wars" premiered from Marvel Comics. In it, a large assortment of heroes and villains were teleported to the planet Battleword by the godlike Beyonder. The assembled factions were given one simple directive: "Slay your enemies and all that you desire shall be yours!"

In issue No. 8 of the series, Spider-man finds his costume severely damaged. Afraid that his secret identity would be revealed, he is directed to a facility where a machine releases a mysterious black liquid. Upon touching it, the liquid morphs to resemble the black costume our hero Spider-man catches the new Spider-woman wearing.

Upon returning to Earth, Spider-man decides to keep the new black costume, and given some of its perks, it's easy to understand why. The mysterious goo is able to morph into civilian clothes, which means that Peter Parker wouldn't have to dash into some alley to change before bashing some villains. The costume not only amplifies his already considerable strength, but gives him an unlimited supply of webbing to boot. Parker is happy, and fans are happy, but the honeymoon is about to end.



Peter discovers that the costume is playing off his emotions and controlling him while he sleeps. Understandably freaked out by this, he consults Mister Fantastic of the Fantastic Four to discover what exactly his new costume is made of. The result is shocking: it is actually an alien symbiote whose ultimate desire is to fuse permanently with Peter Parker!

TOPHER Grace, no longer stuck in the 70s, plays Eddie Brock in the movie

With the aid of Mister Fantastic, Peter is able to discern the symbiote's weakness: sonic waves. However, the symbiote is able to escape from captivity, masquerading as an extra pair of Peter's red and blue Spider-man costume to get him to put it back on again. The action reaches fever pitch as Spider-man swings to a church tower and uses the clanging of church bells to force it off.

Enter Eddie

Damaged, but not down for the count, the symbiote slinks off to find a new host. Disgraced journalist Eddie Brock is a persona non grata with all the major New York newspapers after Spider-man debunked one of his stories. The symbiote knows he has found a kindred spirit in Eddie, and the two bond to form Venom!

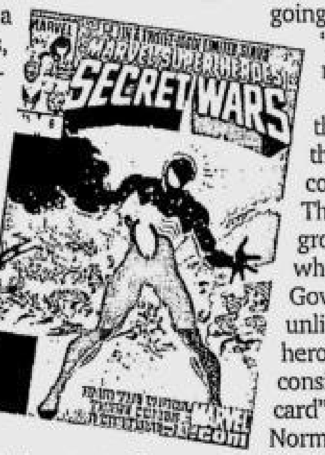
As Venom, Eddie Brock has the strength, agility, and web-slinging abilities on par with Spider-man when he is in the black costume. However, Venom has several more advantages: the symbiote is able to mask itself from Spider-man's famous Spider-sense and it remembers the secret identity of its former host: Peter Parker.

Venom then begins a lethal campaign against Spider-man and his loved ones. Ultimately though, he fails, because of his weakness to sonic weapons. He is carted off to the Vault, a supervillain prison. But Spider-man isn't safe from his nemesis, at least not for very long.

Maximum carnage

During one of Venom's periodic escapes, the alien symbiote gives birth without Eddie's knowledge. This new symbiote bonds with Eddie's cellmate, Cletus Kasady, to form the insane Carnage: think Venom but with about 90 percent less sanity.

Spider-man and Venom, along with a group of superheroes, team up against Carnage's team of villains, which leads to Carnage's defeat. After seeing that Venom can work on the side of the angels, Spider-man and Venom work out an agreement, which leads to Venom moving out to the West Coast. Adopting the persona of a "lethal protector," Venom proceeds to star in several mini-series, with Spider-man occasionally providing an assist.



Things are not always rosy between the two however. When Ben Reily takes over the reins of Spider-man, he fights Venom to a standstill because he isn't aware of Peter Parker's pact with Brock. Later on, Venom and Carnage would team-up to defeat the Carnage symbiote's spawn, Toxin, who allies himself with Spider-man.

Religious epiphany

Eddie Brock discovers that he is dying and the only way to save his life is to permanently bond with the symbiote. He rejects this however, and decides to do one last good deed before his death after watching, and I'm not kidding here, "The Passion of the Christ."

Eddie auctions off the symbiote and donates the proceeds to charity. Unfortunately, mobster Don Fortunato wins the bid and gives the symbiote to his son, who is a bit of a wuss, to become the new Venom. That makes it much easier for Spider-man to defeat him. Disgusted, the symbiote rejects Fortunato's son and kills him.

The symbiote later bonds with another Spider-man villain, Mac Gargan, the Scorpion, and becomes part of Norman Osborne's Sinister 12, who are eventually defeated by Spider-man with the help of the Avengers:

Where are they now?

In recent issues of Spider-man, the Kingpin hires an assassin to kill Peter Parker, but the shot misses and wounds his Aunt May. Distraught and fueled with rage, Peter dons a spandex version of the black suit he wore and sought out the Kingpin. This story is currently ongoing in the pages of the "Amazing Spider-man."

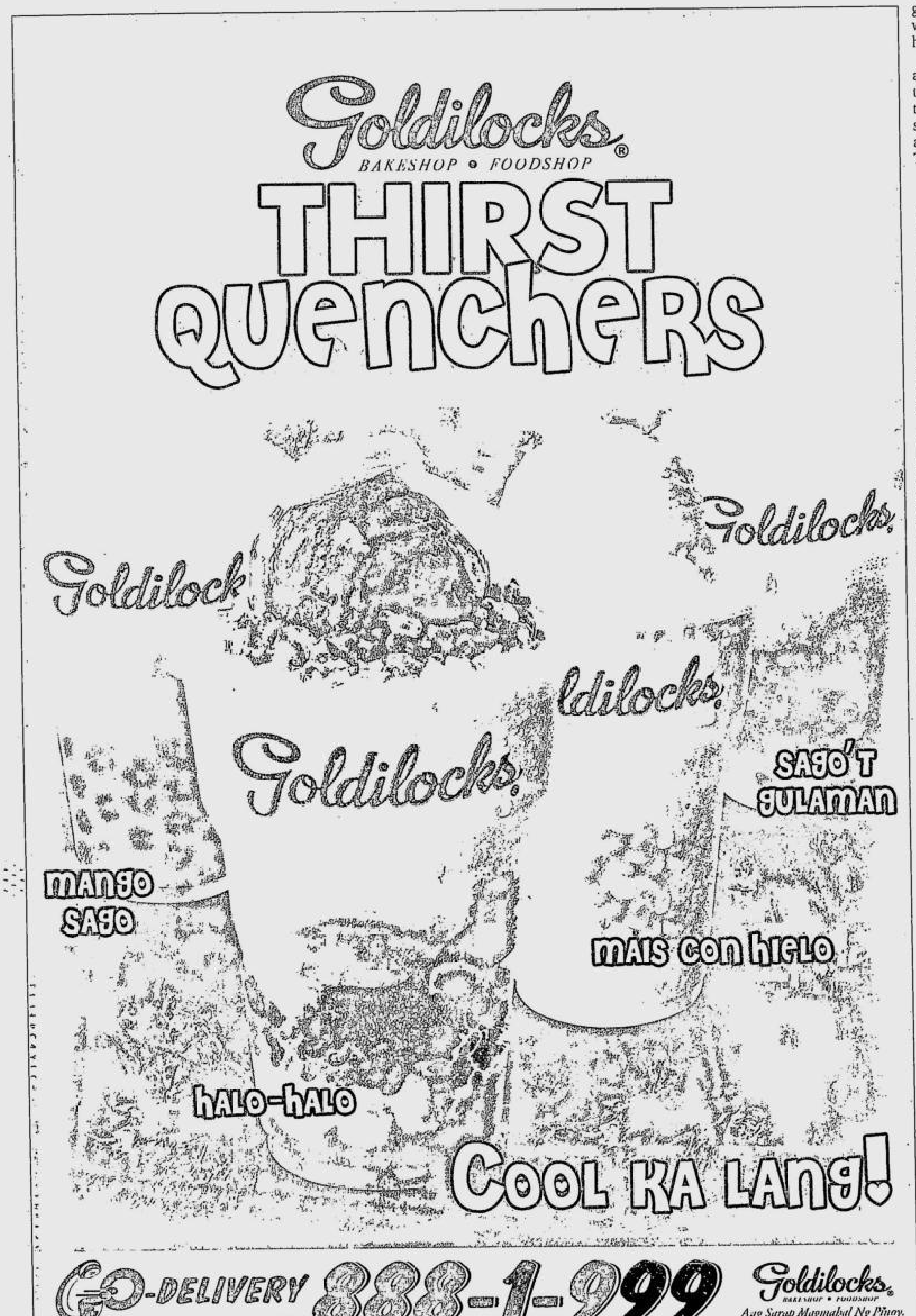
Mac Gargan or the new Venom, on the other hand, becomes part of the Thunderbolts, a group of criminals who work with the US Government to arrest unlicensed superheroes. Since Venom is considered the "wildcard" of the team, leader Norman Osborne has him injected with a series of nanites or miniature robots. At his or his second-in-command Moonstone's command, the nanites can emit a devastating electrical surge which can disable Venom when he gets out of hand.

The Thunderbolts currently have Spider-man ally, the Steel Spider, in their sights, in the current issues of the Thunderbolts series.

Black is the new black

Spider-man's black costume has always been a fan favorite, and next to the Green Goblin, Venom is considered as Spider-man's fiercest rival. It is no wonder then that director Sam Raimi decided to cap off his initial Spider-man trilogy on a high note with both elements being brought into play. And while the story deviates a bit from the comics, you won't see Spider-man jetting off to space, for example.

The trailers and a couple of net spoilers have shown that "Spider-man 3" will remain true to the comics mythos. I, for one, cannot wait to see how it all plays out on the big screen.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2bU! readers touched by 'Idol Gives Back'

LAST WEEK, AMERICAN IDOL decided to raise the bar higher with the "Idol Gives Back" special. Many of our readers were touched, and would have voted to contribute, if it was possible.

While the contestants picked the songs that greatly inspired them, the world's biggest singing idols—Celine Dion, Il Divo, Josh Groban, Rascall Flats, Carrie Underwood, Kelly Clarkson, and even the late Elvis Presley (resurrected through holograph)—lit up the stage with memorable numbers.

For their entries to the Star World-2bU! U B the Judge promo, Sampaguita, Mel, Malou, and Dylan win special premium prizes from Star World and American Idol! To claim your prize, call Cindy Corrales at 893-7472 to 73.

You too can win exciting prizes from the world's biggest singing competition! Catch "American Idol" tonight at 6 p.m. live via satellite (or 8 p.m. primetime and 11:30 p.m.) on Star World. Give us your name and contact details, comment on the finalists' performance, styling, song choice, audience impact, and even fashion in five sentences or less and e-mail to starworld.ph@gmail.com.

Here's what the promo winners thought of last week's episodes:

Sampaguita Ladrido: "I watched the 'Idol Gives Back' show three times, and I was moved to tears every time. Now it can be proven, how the power of television can inspire people to act and make a difference. We were in for a really amazing show.

"Josh Groban, Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, and Annie Lennox all gave performances that were, at turns, stirring, haunting, heartfelt, and dramatic. I found the six finalists kind of stiff at the start of the show. Maybe the musical numbers of the guest performers were too amazing so I was not too impressed with the 'Idol' contestants."

Mel Santiago: "The most stellar performances were, as always, by Melinda and Jordin. I really hope to see them in the finale. I love that it is now becoming harder to guess who will be eliminated next because it makes the show even more exciting to watch."

Malou Gaerlan: "Chris Richardson finally delivered a memorable performance! He was cool and projected himself well when he sang 'Change the World.' Jordin Sparks was amazing, showing great vocal range and improved presence.

Dylan Thor Espenilla: "Jordin Sparks and Melinda Doolittle surely convinced America to vote more! With their breathtaking and vocally superb performances, 'American Idol' will surely collect plenty to give back. Lakisha, sporting the same look as last week, failed to deliver a great performance. Blake's song choice, as usual, is great, but not his performance. Chris, as always, gave a sexy performance. And Phil! Every time he sings, I close my eyes and just listen. He has a very rich voice but not the 'it' factor and charisma."

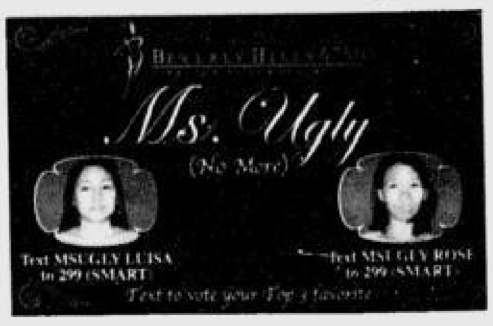
Roadshow fun

TP LINK, THE BIGGEST manufacturer of home networking products in China will kick off its road show on Friday at the Gilmore IT Area in Quezon City. The two-day road show, which will last from May 4 to 5 (11 a.m. to 7 p.m.) will be packed with fun, games and prizes. For more info, visit www.tp-link.com.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph **Website:** www.inquirer.net/entertainment


Beverly Hills
Ms. Ugly
(No More)
Text MSUGLY LUISA to 299 (SMART)
Text MSUGLY ROSE to 299 (SMART)
Text to vote your Top 1 favorite

Sundance exec comes to Manila for film lecture

SUNDANCE Film Festival director Geoff Gilmore WWW.SUNDANCECHANNEL.COM

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE DIRECTOR OF THE Sundance Film Festival, the largest independent cinema festival in the United States, will be coming to Manila for a one-day workshop on independent filmmaking, according to the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

Geoff Gilmore, the festival's artistic director for the past 17 years, is set to speak in a four-hour seminar titled "Sundance in Manila" on May 26, starting 2 p.m., at the De La Salle University-Taft Avenue campus.

Gilmore is also head of the Sundance film fest selection committee and has been a member of the jury of several important international film festivals including those in Berlin, Moscow, Locarno in Italy and the Independent Spirit Awards in California, USA.

The workshop is expected to give students, aspiring filmmakers and industry practitioners "insights on how to make it big in the international scene," according to www.bigfootentertainment.com, the website of the Cebu-based production outfit Bigfoot Entertainment.

The FDCP is working closely with Bigfoot for this venture, said FDCP vice chair Christine Dayrit.

Bigfoot Entertainment is the parent company of Bigfoot Productions, New Cebu Films, The International Academy of Film and Television, and Fashion TV (Philippines and Singapore). It is a fully integrated entertainment company with state-of-the-art studio facilities in Cebu, offices in Los Angeles, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The workshop will be hosted by Bigfoot Entertainment's LA-based chief operating officer Kacy Andrews.

Tickets of "Sundance in Manila," priced

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Leonardo B. Dayao, President, Puregold

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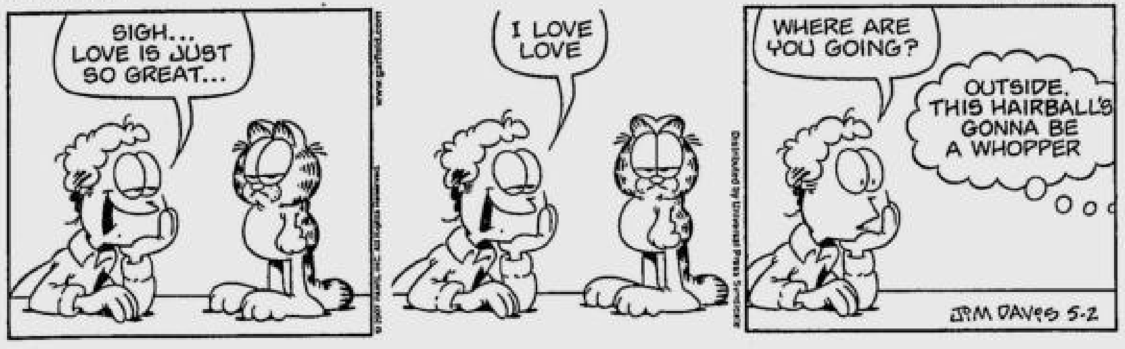
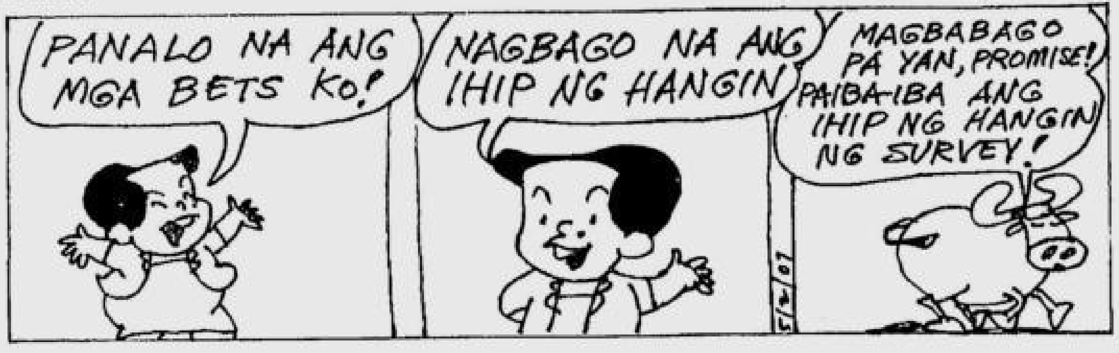
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


SIGH... LOVE IS JUST SO GREAT...
I LOVE LOVE
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OUTSIDE. THIS HAIRBALL'S GONNA BE A WHOPPER
JIM DAVIS 5-2

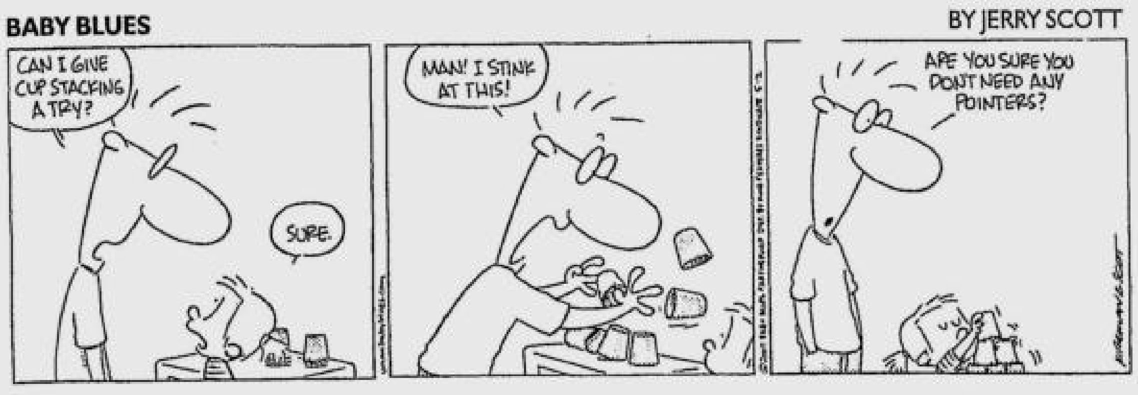
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PANALO NA ANG MGA BETS KO!
NAGBAGO NA ANG IHIP NG HANGIN
MAGBABAGO PA YAN, PROMISE! PAIBA-IBA ANG IHIP NG HANGIN NG SURVEY!

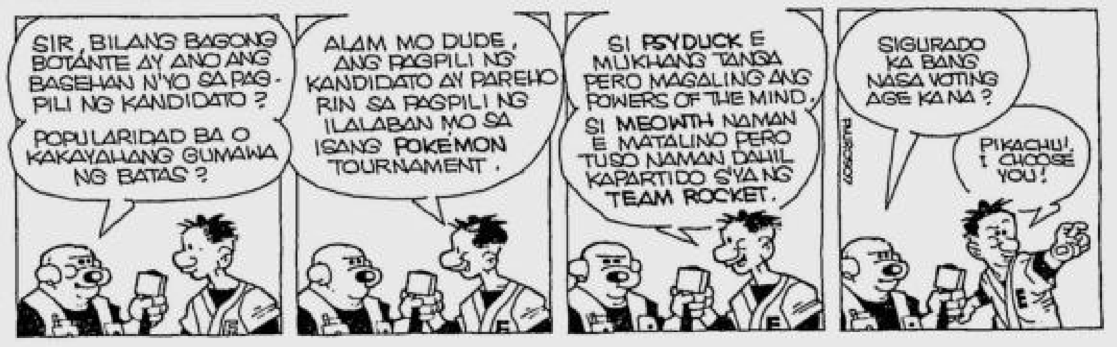
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


CAN I GIVE CUP STACKING A TRY?
SURE.
MAN! I STINK AT THIS!
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T NEED ANY POINTERS?

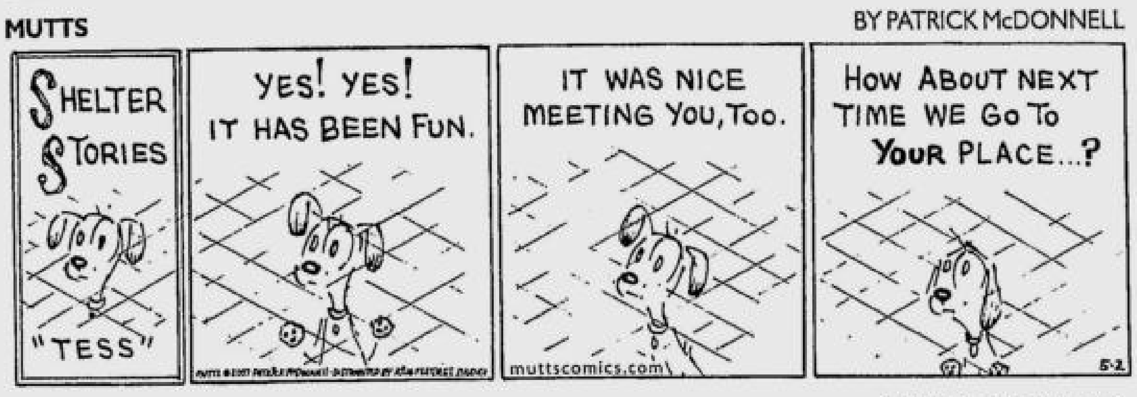
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SIR, BILANG BAGONG BOTANTE AY ANO ANG BASEHAN N'YO SA PAG-PILI NG KANDIDATO?
POPULARIDAD BA O KAKAYAHANG GUMAWA NG BATAS?
ALAM MO DUDE, ANG PAGPILI NG KANDIDATO AY PAREHO RIN SA PAGPILI NG ILALABAN MO SA ISANG POKEMON TOURNAMENT.
SI PSYDUCK E MUKHANG TANGA PERO MAGALING ANG POWERS OF THE MIND. SI MEOWTH NAMAN E MATALINO PERO TUSO NAMAN DAHIL KAPARTIDO S'YA NG TEAM ROCKET.
SIGURADO KA BANG NASA VOTING AGE KA NA?
PIKACHU! I CHOOSE YOU!

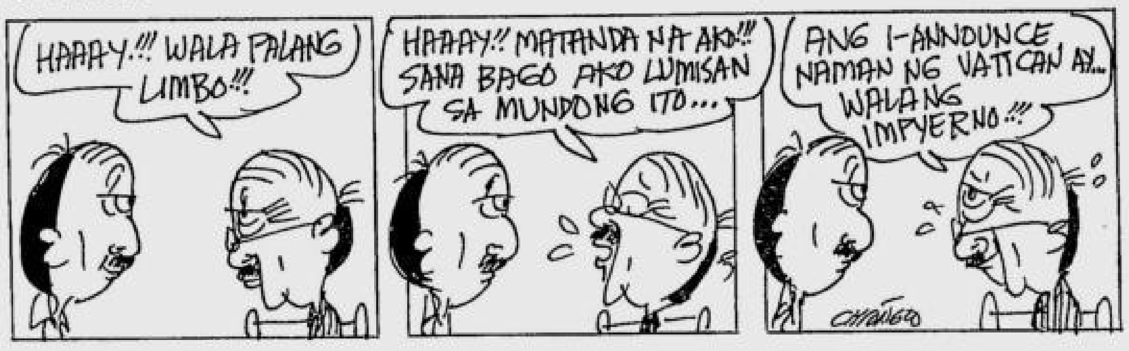
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
"TESS"
YES! YES! IT HAS BEEN FUN.
IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU, TOO.
muttscomics.com
HOW ABOUT NEXT TIME WE GO TO YOUR PLACE...?
5-2

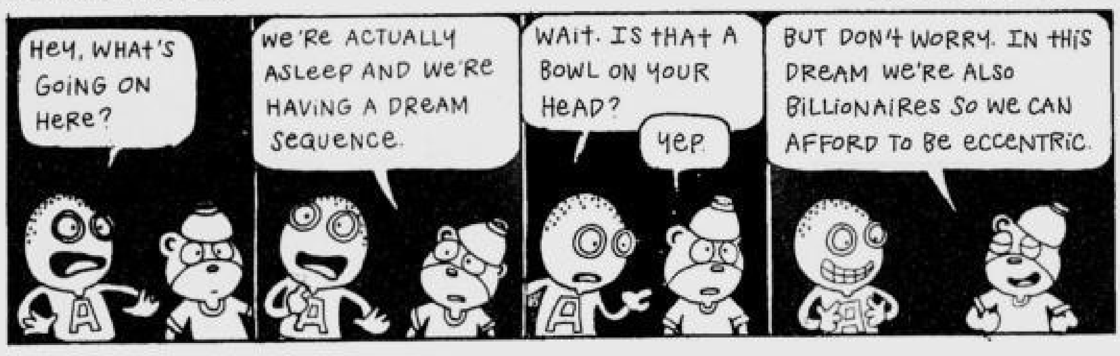
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HAAAY!!! WALA PALANG LIMBO!!!
HAAAY!! MATANDA NA AKO!!! SANA BAGO AKO LUMISAN SA MUNDONG ITO...
ANG I-ANNOUNCE NAMAN NG VATICAN AY... WALANG IMPYERNO!!!
CHIONGLO

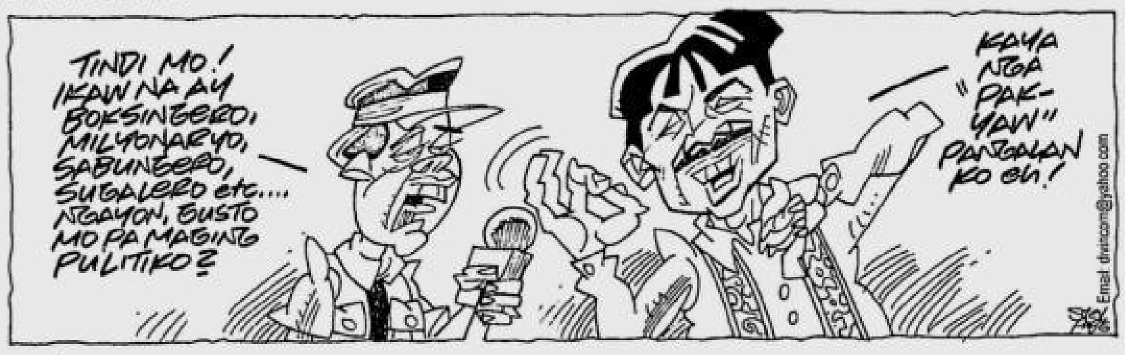
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WE'RE ACTUALLY ASLEEP AND WE'RE HAVING A DREAM SEQUENCE.
WAIT. IS THAT A BOWL ON YOUR HEAD?
YEP.
BUT DON'T WORRY. IN THIS DREAM WE'RE ALSO BILLIONAIRES SO WE CAN AFFORD TO BE ECCENTRIC.

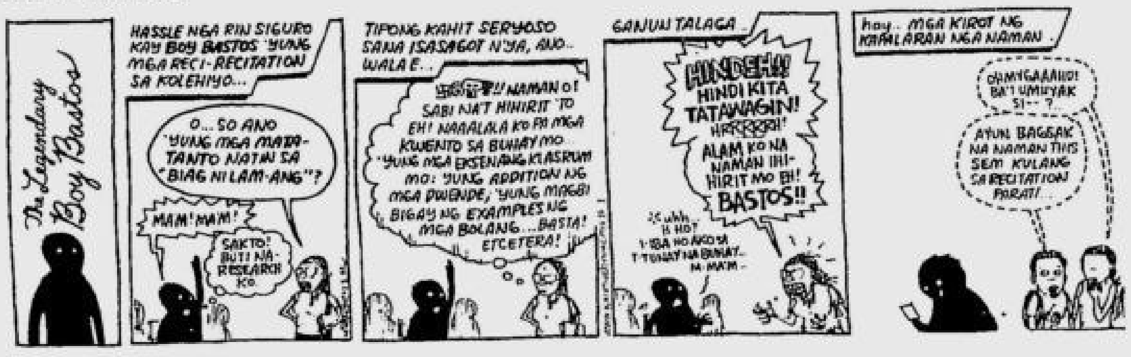
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TINDI MO! IKAW NA AY BOKSINGERO, MILYONARYO, SABUNGERO, SUGALERO etc.... NGAYON, GUSTO MO PA MAGING PULITIKO?
KAYA NGA "PAK-YAW" PANGALAN KO EH!
Email: divincom@yahoo.com

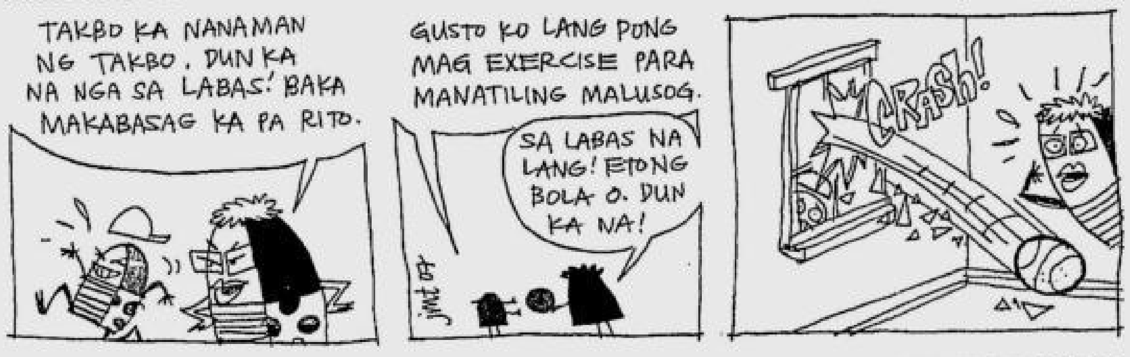
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


The Legendary Boy Bastos
HASSLE NGA RIN SIGURO KAY BOY BASTOS 'YUNG MGA RECI-RECITATION SA KOLEHIYO...
O... SO ANO 'YUNG MGA MARA-TANTO NATIN SA "BIAG NI LAM-ANG"?
MAM! MAM!
SAKTO! BUTI NA-RESEARCH KO.
TIPONG KAHIT SERYOSO SANA ISASAGOT N'YA, ANO.. WALA E...
NAMAN O! SABI NA'T HIHIRIT 'TO EH! NAAALALA KO PA MGA KWENTO SA BUHAY MO. 'YUNG MGA EKSENANG KLASRUM MO: 'YUNG ADDITION NG MGA DWENDE, 'YUNG MAGBIBIGAY NG EXAMPLES NG MGA BOLANG... BASTA! ETCETERA!
GANUN TALAGA..
HINDEH!! HINDI KITA TATAWAGIN! HRRRR! ALAM KO NA NAMAN IHI-HIRIT MO EH! BASTOS!!
uhh.. IS NOT I-IBA NO AKO SA T-TUNAY NA BUHAY.. M-MAM..
hay.. MGA KIROT NG KAPALARAN NGA NAMAN.
OAMYGAAAUD! BA'T UMIIYAK SI-- ?
AYUN. BAGSAK NA NAMAN THIS SEM. KULANG SA RECITATION PARATI...

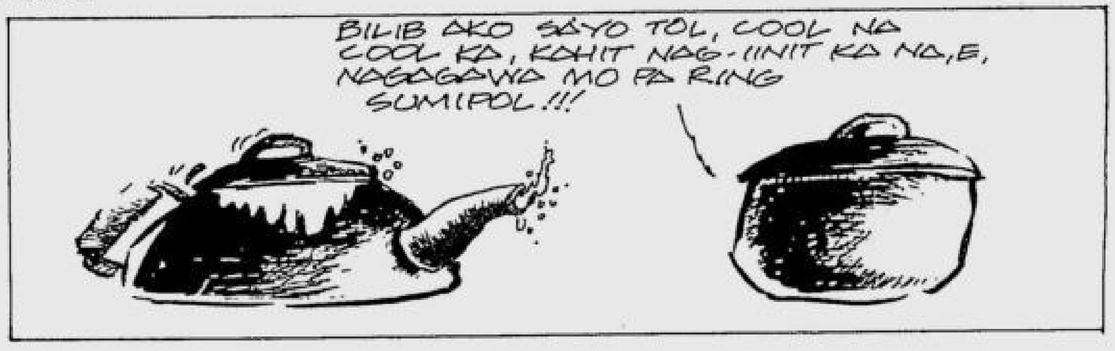
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


TAKBO KA NANAMAN NG TAKBO. DUN KA NA NGA SA LABAS! BAKA MAKABASAG KA PA RITO.
GUSTO KO LANG PONG MAG EXERCISE PARA MANATILING MALUSOG.
SA LABAS NA LANG! ETONG BOLA O. DUN KA NA!
CRASH!

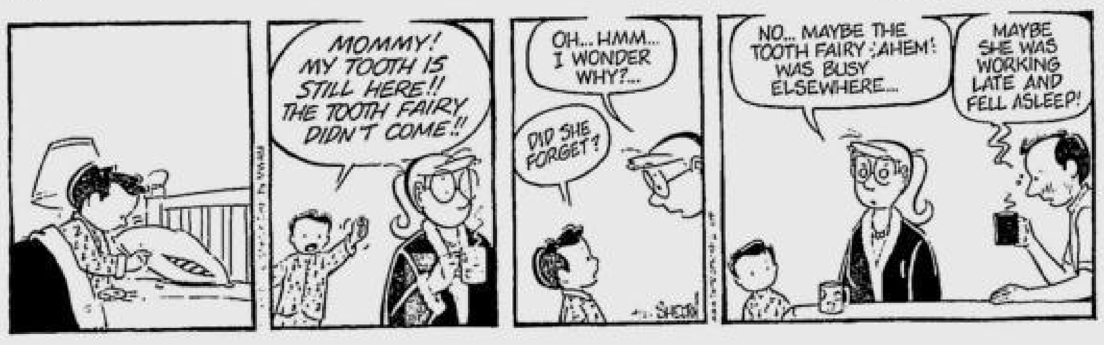
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BILIB AKO SAYO TOL, COOL NA COOL KA, KAHIT NAG-IINIT KA NA, E, NAGAGAWA MO PA RING SUMIPOL!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MOMMY! MY TOOTH IS STILL HERE!! THE TOOTH FAIRY DIDN'T COME!!
OH... HMM... I WONDER WHY?...
DID SHE FORGET?
NO... MAYBE THE TOOTH FAIRY :AHEM: WAS BUSY ELSEWHERE...
MAYBE SHE WAS WORKING LATE AND FELL ASLEEP!
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Abyss
6 CD alternative
10 Former Turkish leaders
14 "Gay" city of song
15 Concept
16 Satirical Sahl
17 Fails to mention
18 Cravats
19 Countertenor
20 Parsifal's quest
23 Cathedral area
26 Scottish loch
27 Edgy
28 Underlying
30 Ditto's sister
31 Worldwide worker's grp.
32 Games mall
36 Sov. news agcy.
40 Ponce de Leon's quest
43 Punta del __
44 Jury compositions
45 Fizzle out
46 T-shirt sizes
48 Of high mountains
50 Shrewd
53 Force out
56 Lecherous look
57 Jason's quest
60 Hydrox competitor
61 Memo abbr.
62 "Golden Boy" playwright
66 San __, Italy
67 Dweeb
68 Snow abode
69 Hebrew month
70 Literary collections
71 Checks

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14					■	15				■	16			
17					■	18				■	19			
■	■	■	20		21					22				
23	24	25		■	26				■	27				
28				29		■	■	■	30			■	■	■
31			■	32		33	34	35		■	36	37	38	39
40			41							42				
43				■	44						■	45		
■	■	■	46	47		■	■	■	48		49			
50	51	52			■	53	54	55		■	56			
57					58					59		■	■	■
60				■	61				■	62		63	64	65
66				■	67				■	68				
69				■	70				■	71				

By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

5/2/07

DOWN
1 Naval noncom
2 Bad actor
3 "Exodus" protagonist
4 Small sofa
5 Netting
6 Church contribution
7 Tata in Tijuana
8 Banana skins
9 No sweat!
10 Almond liqueur
11 Heights in the Middle East
12 Gilmore of the NBA
13 Shoulder wrap
21 Lures into danger
22 Old Pontiac
23 De Maupassant novel
24 __ Hills, IL
25 Sturdy
29 NIT part
30 Let the air out of
33 Hush-hush grp.
34 Actress Blyth
35 Stag's mate
37 WW2 hero Murphy
38 "Goosebumps" author
39 Diaphanous
41 Nearby in the burbs
42 Fashion monogram
47 Director Spike
49 Binding promise
50 Old Greek marketplace
51 Prepared an apple
52 Muslim scholars
53 Time after time
54 Marine starter?
55 Transmits
58 Zola heroine
59 Coconut fiber
63 Whitney or Wallach
64 2000 lbs.
65 Help!

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

D	O	C	S	■	S	L	A	B	■	M	O	R	O	N
A	V	O	N	■	C	O	O	L	■	A	G	O	R	A
D	A	N	A	■	A	N	N	A	■	G	L	O	B	S
■	■	F	R	I	N	G	E	B	E	N	E	F	I	T
S	L	I	E	R	■	■	■	S	L	O	■	S	T	Y
C	U	D	■	A	S	A	P	■	A	L	I	■	■	■
A	C	E	S	■	H	U	E	■	P	I	N	A	T	A
B	R	I	N	K	O	F	D	I	S	A	S	T	E	R
S	E	N	I	O	R	■	A	T	E	■	T	A	X	I
■	■	■	P	O	T	■	L	O	D	E	■	N	A	E
S	E	A	■	K	E	G	■	■	■	A	B	Y	S	S
M	A	R	G	I	N	O	F	E	R	R	O	R	■	■
A	G	R	E	E	■	O	O	Z	E	■	O	A	H	U
R	E	A	M	S	■	S	A	R	I	■	S	T	E	P
T	R	Y	S	T	■	E	L	A	N	■	T	E	N	S

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5/2/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a perfectionist with great organizational skills. You observe people and have definite opinions about others. You generally need some time alone every day, which is why many of you have hobbies. If you like what you're doing, you're extremely hardworking. You're curious about what's going on in the lives of others. This year you will learn something special and valuable.

Birthdate of: David Beckham, soccer star; Brad Richards, hockey player; Sarah Hughes, Olympic figure skater.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have strong opinions about financial matters today; however, others oppose you. If possible, wait a day or two, and this opposition will lessen.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The Full Moon today opposes your sign, encouraging disagreements with others. You identify strongly with your point of view, but others might not agree. (Oops!)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Today's Full Moon puts you a little off-guard because it occurs in an obscure part of your chart. It affects your subconscious. Just relax and go with the flow as much as possible.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Avoid disagreements with friends today. It's a Full-Moon day, and people are kind of stuck in their ways. Don't try to budge anyone.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might feel caught between the demands of home and family versus the demands of your career or your external world. Parents and authority figures could be difficult. Go gently.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Publishing, educational concerns and anything connected with travel or dealing with foreign countries could be stressed today because of the Full Moon. Be flexible in your opinions. (Easier said than done.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Money matters plus concerns about your responsibilities for others could come to a head today because of the Full Moon. This forces you to compromise with the values of others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The Full Moon today is in your sign, directly opposite the Sun in Taurus. This is the classic time for conflicts with partners and close friends. Be as tolerant as you can.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Don't insist on getting your way at work today. It will only create more opposition to you. By Friday, things are easier.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Parents must be patient with children today. Everyone (even your dog or cat) feels the influence of today's Full Moon. Try to go with the flow.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): A parent or some other authority figure might oppose your ideas at home or regarding family matters today. Don't dig in your heels. Wait till Friday.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): People feel quite opinionated today! Don't try to win an argument. Just let things be. Let sleeping dogs lie. (It's the Full Moon!)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

1	6						5	7
2		8				4		9
4			2	9	1			8
	5						6	
7			3		9			5
6								4
8			9	3	5			1
	1						9	
		2	8	1	7	5		

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/02

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	3	9	6	1	4	8	5	2
2	1	6	8	7	5	9	3	4
5	4	8	9	3	2	7	6	1
1	2	7	4	9	3	6	8	5
3	6	4	5	2	8	1	7	9
8	9	5	7	6	1	4	2	3
4	7	3	1	5	6	2	9	8
9	5	1	2	8	7	3	4	6
6	8	2	3	4	9	5	1	7

Difficulty Level ★★

Sundance exec comes to Manila . . .

From page D1

at P3,000 and P2,500 (student rate), are available online.

P1-M grant

Meanwhile, Seiko Films is seeking P1 million in financial aid for the world premiere of its digital movie "Foster Child" at the prestigious Cannes International Film Festival in France.

In his letter to the FDCP, Seiko Films' Robbie Tan is requesting for subsidy for the movie's subtitling, printing (in French and English) as well as the airfare of four members of its production team, said Dayrit.

Subtitling costs P100,000 while printing costs P70,000 per copy, Tan said in an earlier interview.

On May 9, the FDCP board will meet to evaluate Tan's request, Dayrit said. The FDCP is only allowed to shell out the maximum amount of P400,000.

The FDCP, through the International Film Festival Committee, helps local films penetrate the international market by backing up producers of movies bound for film festivals abroad.

"Foster Child," by prize-winning director Brillante "Dante" Mendoza, will be screened on May 25 in the festival's Director's Fortnight section, which showcases the works of talented up-and-coming filmmakers worldwide.

On May 24, Dayrit said she and FDCP executive director Lari Suzara will represent the FDCP in a meeting with the National Center for Cinema, its French counterpart, "to explore possibilities of tie-ups or coproduction with French film outfits."

"We will also look into the various grants Filipino filmmakers could apply for," she added.

DID YOU KNOW...

'Harry Potter 5' in 3-D

WARNER BROS.' "HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE Phoenix" will be shown at the IMAX Theater of SM Mall of Asia starting July 11, with the last 20 minutes of the film in 3-D format.

"Order of the Phoenix," whose latest trailer premiered in local theaters on May 1, is based on the best-selling J.K. Rowling book and is the fifth installment of the widely successful "Harry Potter" film series.

NOW ON DISC

'All The Kings Men'

MAGNAVISION Home Video presents the video release of "All The King's Men" on VCD and DVD.

The film tells the story of an idealistic southern politician, "Boss" Willie Stark, who appeals to the common man while effectively playing dirty politics. Slowly, he becomes corrupted by the system.

Starring an all-star ensemble including Sean Penn, Jude Law, Kate Winslet, Mark Ruffalo and Anthony Hopkins, the film is based on the Robert Penn Warren novel.

MARIE ANTOINETTE
KIRSTEN DUNST

'Marie Antoinette'

Based on Antonia Fraser's book, "Marie Antoinette" tells the story of the ill-fated Queen of France, from her birth in Imperial Austria to her later life in France.

Starring Kirsten Dunst, it is now available on VCD and DVD from Magnavision Home Video.

Cinderella 3
A Twist in Time

'Cinderella III'

The Disney classic "Cinderella III: A Twist In Time" premieres on VCD and DVD.

The original fairy tale takes a different turn when the Fairy Godmother's magic wand falls into the wrong hands and the glass slipper no longer fits Cinderella.

The video is available in Video City, Astrovision, Astroplus, Odyssey, O-Music, Music One, New Radio City, SM Record Bars for P275 (VCD) and P550 (DVD).

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

SPIDER-MAN 3 G 12:40,3:40,6:40,9:40	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 1:10,4:10,10:10	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 2:10,5:10,8:10,11:10
SPIDER-MAN 3 G 11:40,2:40,5:40	FIREHOUSE DOG G 12:10,3:10,6:10	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 1:40,4:40,10:40

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

MTRCB RATING
G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
Starring Josh Hutcherson from "Zathura"
"WONDERFUL.
One of the best films of all time."
Janet Strokes, Film Advisory Board
FIREHOUSE DOG
NOW SHOWING

beat the LINES and GET your
TICKETS now!!!
THE GREATEST BATTLE LIES WITHIN
TOBEY MAGUIRE
SPIDER-MAN 3
MTRCB Rating: G

TICKETS
for Spider-Man 3
are now available
at the ticket booth at all
Robinsons Movieworld
Branches Nationwide
OPENS MAY 01

Araneta Center
aranetacenter.net
Gateway Ali MALL FarmersPlaza
gatewaymall.com.ph
Gateway CINEPLEX*10
COMPLETELY UNOBSTRUCTED VIEWS
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

SPIDERMAN 3
11:05 / 11:40 / 12:00 / 12:35 / 1:10 / 1:25 / 1:45
2:00 / 2:35 / 2:55 / 3:30 / 4:05 / 4:20 / 4:40
4:55 / 5:30 / 5:50 / 6:25 / 7:00 / 7:15 / 7:35
7:50 / 8:25 / 8:45 / 9:20 / 9:55 / 10:10 / 10:30 / 10:45

DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

PAN'S LABYRINTH	SHOOTER	SPIDERMAN 3
1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	1:55 / 4:30 / 7:05 / 9:40	12:40 / 3:25 / 6:10 / 8.55

Ali MALL 5

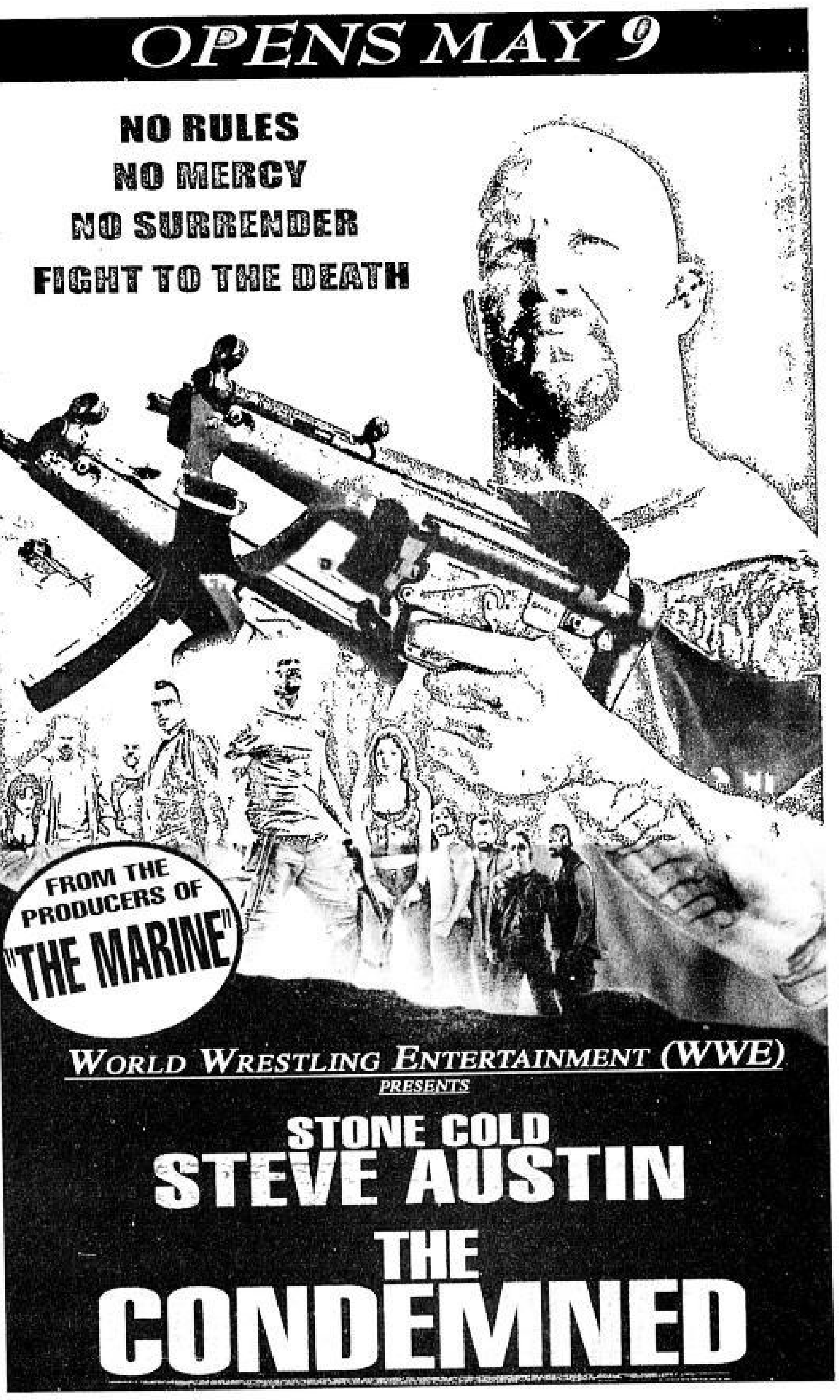
1	SPIDERMAN 3 12:45 / 3:10 / 5:35 / 8:00	
2	SPIDERMAN 3 1:20 / 3:45 / 6:10 / 8.35	
3	SPIDERMAN 3 11:50 / 2:10 / 4:30 / 6:50 / 9:10	
4	ANG CUTE NG INA MO 12 30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8.30	
5	SHOOTER 12:35 / 3:10 / 5:45 / 8:20	

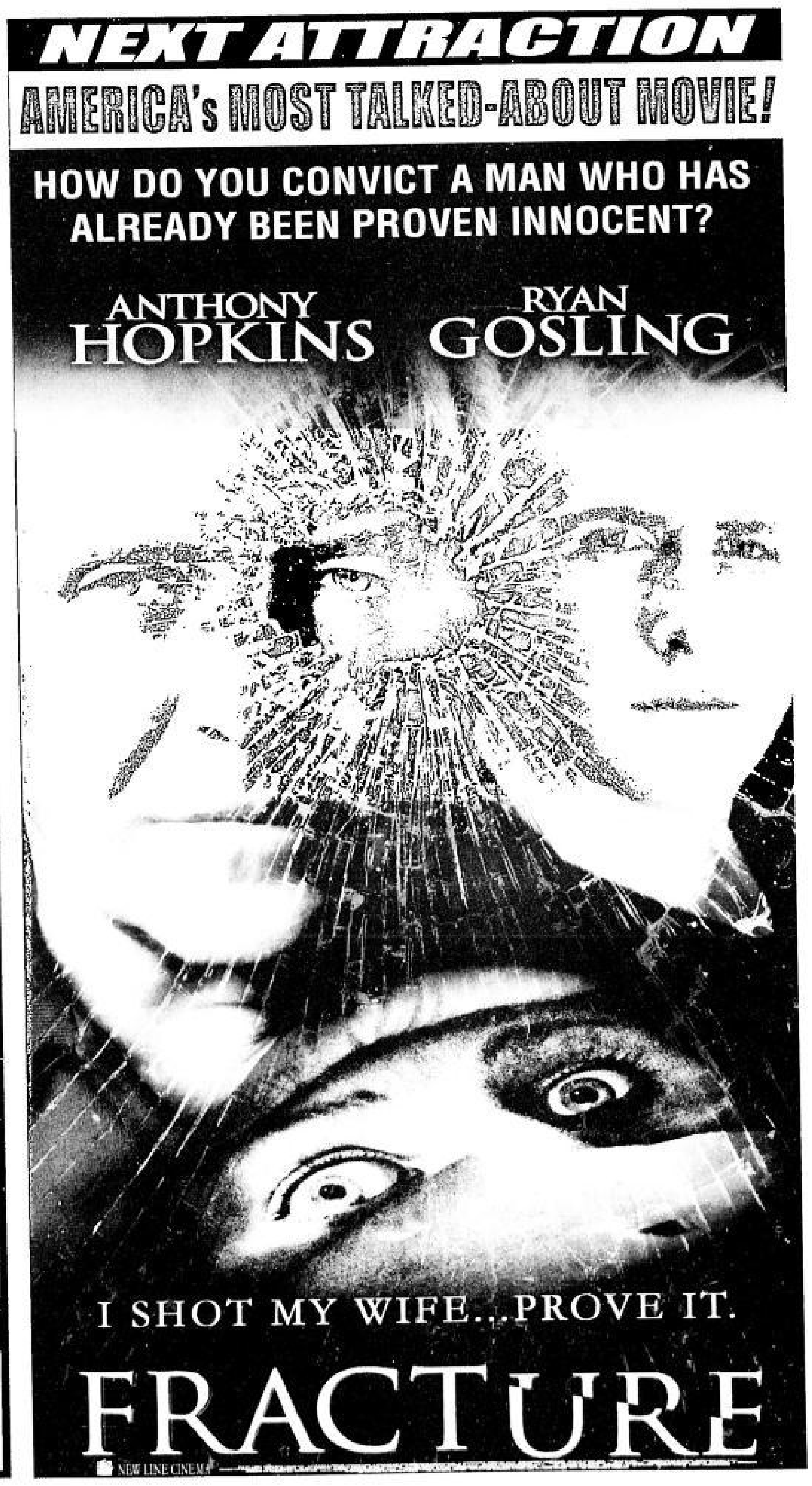
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM
www.aranetacoliseum.com

PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE	PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
MAY 2, 2007 Wednesday	MAY 4, 2007 Friday
4:35 - Welcoat vs. Ginebra 7:20 - Air 21 vs. Sta Lucia	4:35 - Coca Cola vs. Purefoods 7:20 - Red Bull vs. Talk N Text


OPENS MAY 9
NO RULES
NO MERCY
NO SURRENDER
FIGHT TO THE DEATH
FROM THE PRODUCERS OF "THE MARINE"
WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT (WWE)
PRESENTS
STONE COLD
STEVE AUSTIN
THE CONDEMNED


NEXT ATTRACTION
AMERICA's MOST TALKED-ABOUT MOVIE!
HOW DO YOU CONVICT A MAN WHO HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVEN INNOCENT?
ANTHONY HOPKINS
RYAN GOSLING
I SHOT MY WIFE...PROVE IT.
FRACTURE
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SPIDER-MAN 3
NOW SHOWING NATIONWIDE
SM CINEMA
MALL OF ASIA CINEMAS
THE PODIUM CINEMA
AND IN IMAX 2D AT
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
COMPLEMENT YOUR MOVIE WATCHING WITH THE MOVIE MEAL AVAILABLE AT ALL SM CINEMA SNACK BARS NATIONWIDE
*SPIDER-MAN 3 MOVIE MEAL CONSISTS OF POPCORN, HOTDOG SANDWICH AND DRINK. PRICE MAY VARY PER BRANCH.
MTRCB RATING: G (ALL AGES ADMITTED)

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0242
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
SPIDERMAN 3
(2D)
10:30AM 1:30PM 4:30PM
7:30PM 10:30PM
Admission Fee- P350
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 THE REAPING/ SPIDERMAN 3
4 THE SHOOTER/ SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
PREMIERE CINEMA
SPIDERMAN 3
CENTERSTAGE
SPIDERMAN 3
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
SPIDERMAN 3
CINEMA 2
SPIDERMAN 3
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 PAN'S LABYRINTH
9 SPIDERMAN 3
10 THE SHOOTER
11 SPIDERMAN 3
12 SPIDERMAN 3

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3/ PAN'S LABYRINTH
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3/ THE SHOOTER
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3
9 SPIDERMAN 3
10 SPIDERMAN 3
11 SPIDERMAN 3/ ANG CUTE NG INA MO
12 SPIDERMAN 3/ FIREHOUSE DOG

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3
9 THE SHOOTER
10 SPIDERMAN 3
11 SPIDERMAN 3
12 WILD HOGS

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 FIREHOUSE DOG
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
9 PAN'S LABYRINTH
10 THE SHOOTER

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 THE SHOOTER
6 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 PAN'S LABYRINTH
8 THE SHOOTER
9 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

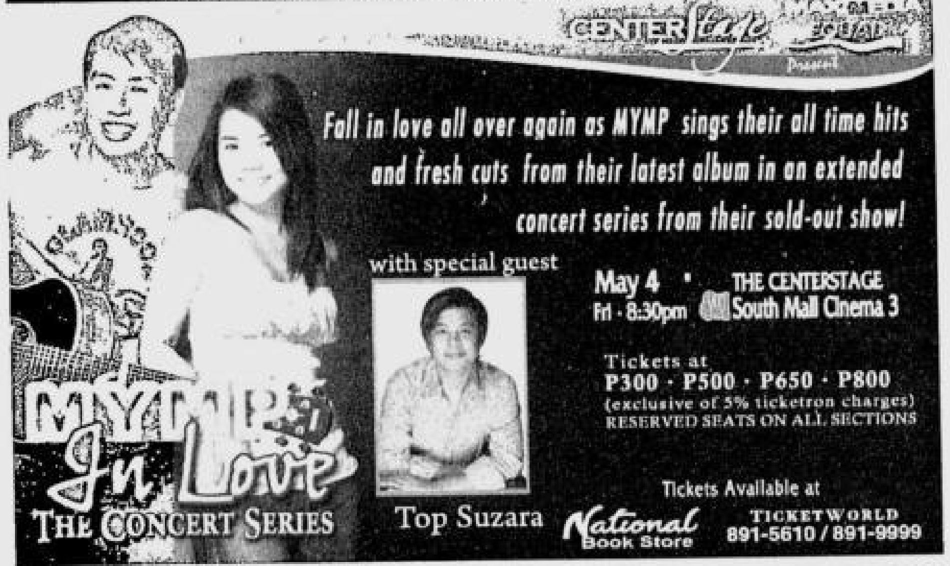
SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3
9 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
10 THE SHOOTER
11 SPIDERMAN 3
12 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 SPIDERMAN
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SHOWTiME
EVENT CALENDAR



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891-5610 / 891-9999

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 THE SHOOTER
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
6 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
6 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 SPIDERMAN 3
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3/ PATHFINDER

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 SPIDERMAN 3
5 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
6 SPIDERMAN 3
7 SPIDERMAN 3
8 SPIDERMAN 3

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 SPIDERMAN 3
2 SPIDERMAN 3
3 SPIDERMAN 3
4 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
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1 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
3 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
4 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) SPIDER-MAN 3
5 RESRVED

metropolis star ALABANG
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PREMONTION

THEATRES
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-5271
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 THE SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 SPIDER-MAN 3
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
2 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
3 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN 3
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 THE SHOOTER

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 ANG CUTE NG INA MO
4 SATANICA

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 THE SHOOTER

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
2 ANG CUTE NG INA MO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
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THE BLOOMFIELDS puts an alternative melody to rock 'n' roll.

The Bloomfields' retro-active debut

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

SOME ROCK 'N' ROLL CLASSICS are reinterpreted in the self-titled debut album of The Bloomfields, a talented local band that specializes in retro-styled vocal harmonies and melodic tunes. Aside from many inspired covers of familiar foreign and Filipino pop and rock songs from bygone eras, the CD also features a few originals that blend rather well with that fanciful mélange of old-school anthem reinventions.

They perform songs by the Beatles, Beach Boys and even Vic Sotto and Joey De Leon, that one might assume The Bloomfields members have lived through the years when those artists actively made music. Well, nope, these men are only in their early 20s.

Smooth alternative

Their conscious foray into the past recaptures the differing textures of those years' evolving soundscapes, and they are adventuresome enough to pull it off. At a time when some of their contemporaries seem bent on creating loud, growling and edgy pieces mostly devoid of melody or vocal artistry, these musicians refreshingly give a fun, smooth alternative to all that.

That's primarily their shtick and their niche. The quintet, made up of old schoolmates and friends Jay Jay Lozano (guitar), Louie Poco (bass) Rocky Collado (drums), Lakan Hila (keyboards) and Pepe Lozano (guitar), also share singing duties.

They have matching suits and bushy '70s haircuts that are in style again, to complete that time-travel illusion. These are prominently displayed on the album package, a die-cut, gatefold, cardboard stock that niftily holds the CD (designed to look like—what else?—a vinyl record).

Listening to The Bloomfields' lively remakes is mostly pleasurable and a different sojourn, as they aren't exact, copied simulacra of the originals. They're not necessarily better versions, but they're still very listenable. "Girl From Ipanema," for instance, is a bouncy, more openly suggestive rendition, while Lennon-McCartney compositions "If I Fell" and "You're Gonna Lose That Girl" sound more youthful and differently exuberant, vocals-wise.

Playful re-creation

The cover of the OPM classic "Ale" is rightly a playful re-creation with interwoven harmonies, while the latest incarnation of "Iskul Bukol" is almost as rowdy and spirited as the title song of the old local sitcom that starred Tito, Vic and Joey. The vocalists' grasp of intonation and inflection make them sound just as good in Filipino, so their original songs feel similarly honest and well-projected. "Wala Nang Iba," "Please Don't Go," "Alam Mo Na Yun," "Say You Do" and "The Way I Care" are all catchy compositions by Jay Jay Lozano and Rocky Collado.

Out of 17 songs, this album only has five originals. Perhaps next time, The Bloomfields will experiment more and create more new songs, as they're very competently done here.

Sure, their versions of "King Creole," "Little Honda," "Never Let Her Slip Away" and other old stuff sound good and may introduce more listeners to the greats. But the band can definitely make new material, as a solid, audible style is already in place, and its members' talents are evident in this charming initial offering.

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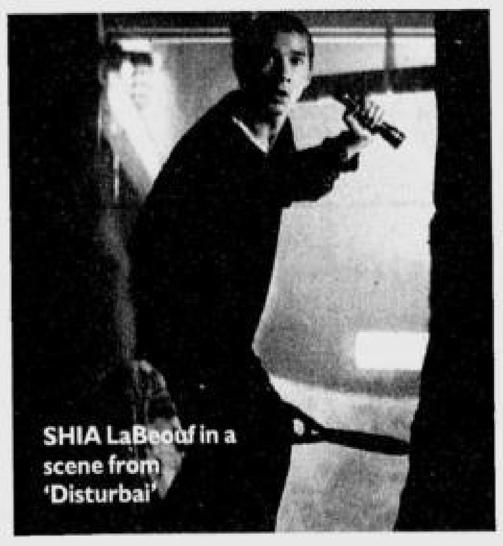

SHIA LaBeouf in a scene from 'Disturbai'

'Disturbia' offers some smarts and suspense

REVIEW

LOS ANGELES—THE FILMMAKERS ARE quick to acknowledge "Rear Window" as a forerunner for the voyeurism of "Disturbia," a thriller about a housebound teenager convinced that his neighbor's a serial killer.

What they don't have to say is that "Disturbia" is no "Rear Window," because you already knew that.

"Rear Window" was Alfred Hitchcock, James Stewart and Grace Kelly. "Disturbia" is director D.J. Caruso ("Two for the Money," "The Salton Sea"), and stars Shia LaBeouf and newcomer Sarah Roemer.

Comparisons between "Rear Window" and "Disturbia" end with the plot similarity of apartment-bound Stewart spying on a neighbor he believes murdered his wife. Of course, "Disturbia" is not going to measure up to that classic of cloistered paranoia.

Yet "Disturbia" is a decent enough thriller far smarter than most big studio flicks with teen protagonists. The movie's completely predictable, but LaBeouf comes off as a sturdy leading man with one of his most assured performances yet, while Caruso crafts some mildly clever moments of suspense.

Menacing Morse

The menacing presence of David Morse as the suspect neighbor adds enormously to the gravity and tension of "Disturbia." The great thing about Morse is, he can play nice guys and evil guys in almost precisely the same way, and they're equally believable.

That keeps the audience guessing a bit, though you pretty much see early on in the screenplay by Carl Ellsworth ("Red Eye") where things are heading.

"Disturbia" opens with a prologue in which young Kale enjoys a pleasant day of fishing and bonding with his dad. Tragedy hits on the way home, dad is killed, and a year later, Kale's a sullen slacker, losing his temper and punching out a teacher who makes an offhand remark about his father.

Kale is placed under house arrest at the home he shares with his mom (Carrie-Anne Moss). An electronic ankle bracelet monitors his location, tipping off the authorities if he gets more than 100 feet (30.5 meters) from the house.

Claustrophobic

Bored to death, Kale becomes a Peeping Tom, spying on his neighbors, particularly the beautiful girl who's just moved in next door, rebellious Ashley (Roemer). Ashley and Kale's pal Ronnie (Aaron Yoo) eventually are recruited into our hero's surveillance of the loner Turner (Morse), whom Kale thinks could be a much-publicized killer stalking beautiful women.

Hitchcock used the lavish urban block constructed for "Rear Window" to great advantage, the detail and close quarters helping to create a mood of claustrophobic drama and desperation.

The neighborhood in "Disturbia" just looks like an anonymous suburb, a clean, pleasant, dull place to live.

Part of the filmmakers' point is that any old crazy person might be lurking behind the drawn curtains of the next house in an anonymous locale. Still makes for a very limiting, boring place to set a movie. *David Germain, AP*

ROUNDUP

'Disturbia' retains No. 1 spot

EYES ARE ON THE PEEPING TOM THRILLER "Disturbia," which fended off a weak batch of newcomers to remain No. 1 for the third straight weekend with $9.1 million.

Starring Shia LaBeouf as a house-bound teen whose surveillance of neighbors uncovers a killer, the DreamWorks-Paramount production raised its total to $52.2 million after three weekends.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at US and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers LLC: 2) "The Invisible," $7.6M; 3) "Next," $7.2M; 4) "Fracture," $7.1M; 5) "Blades of Glory," $5.2M; 6) "Meet the Robinsons," $4.84M; 7) "Hot Fuzz," $4.8M; 8) "Vacancy," $4.2M; 9) "The Condemned," $4M; 10) "Are We Done Yet?," $3.4M. *AP*

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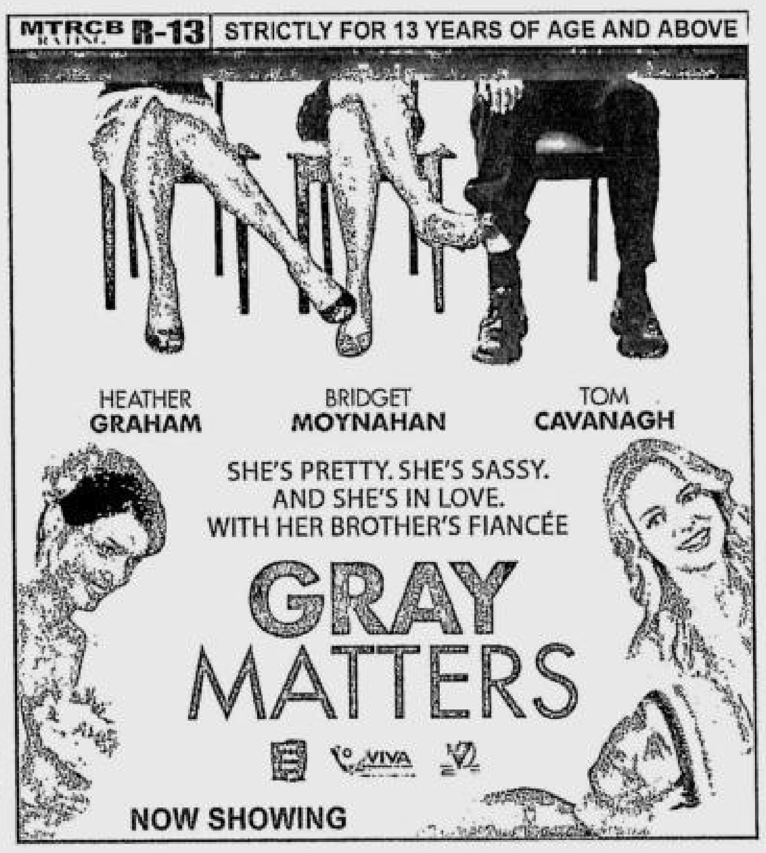

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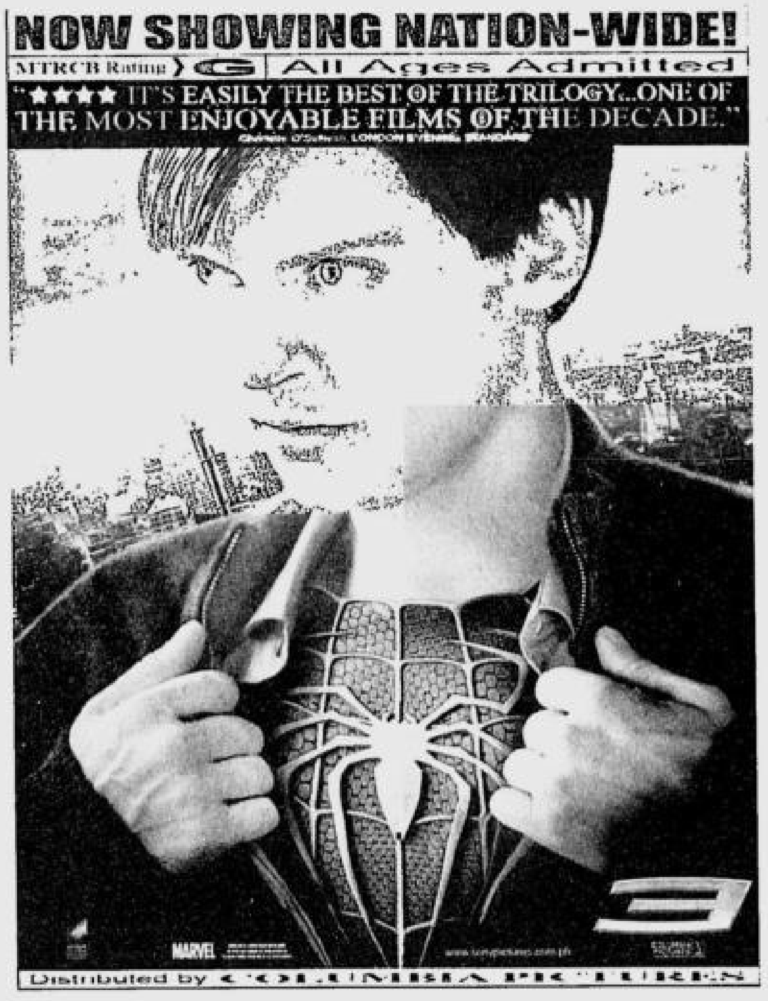

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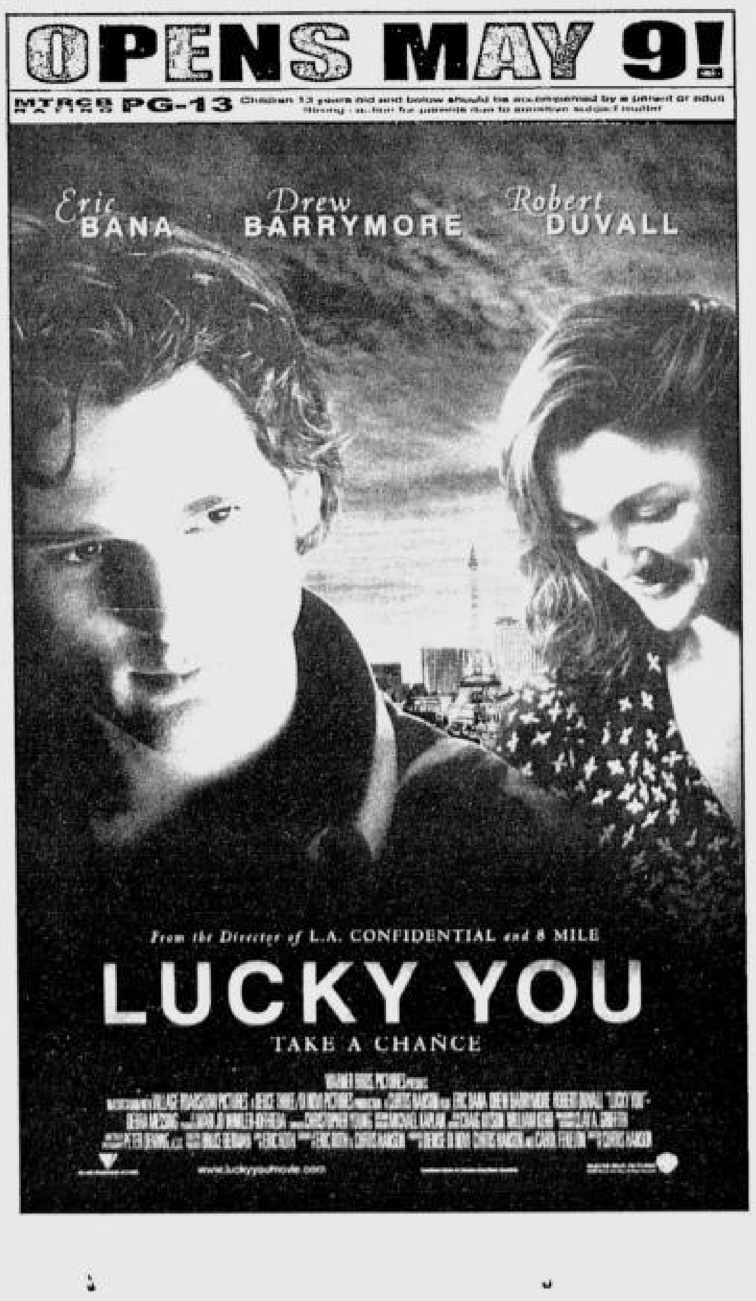

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Making lots of golden hay while the stellar star shine

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

How much are stars worth?

TALENTED PERFORMERS ENTER SHOW business to share their insights into human nature with members of the audience, to further hone their thespic skills by way of challenging roles and to become rich and famous.

Let's face it, stars may wax poetic about their artistry, but most of them aren't exactly averse to becoming mega-millionaires while they're at the ardent service of their thespic muse and audience.

In fact, some of them even admit that they're in the biz to become as stupendously rich as they can possibly be.

How much, exactly, do top stars make? In Hollywood, there's supposed to be an exclusive club of male superstars who get at least $20 million per movie.

Others add icing to that already very sumptuous cake by also becoming line producers, thus making more millions. And a very few ultra-bankable stars invest their fees for a bigger slice of the gross, earning a whopping $60 million per hit film in the process!

What about TV stars? A recent panel dismission on TV revealed that, when a show like "Grey's Anatomy" is just starting to get good ratings, its leads could settle for as "little" as $30,000 per episode. But, as a series' ratings escalate, so do its stars' fees for the new season.

Take "Friends": Its six leads ended up making a stunning $1 million per episode each on the hit series' last year!

The cast of "Seinfeld's" Jerry Seinfeld is cited as an example of how high the financial stakes can get on TV when a show is a superhit:

After years of raking it in, Seinfeld decided to quit while he was on top, and not all of his producers' extravagant blandishments could lure him back to TV's very profitable salt mines.

Would you believe his producer even offered him $200 million for just one more season? And Seinfeld still turned them down? In peso terms, that's like saying nix to billions of bucks! Gulp.

What about current series? "The Sopranos'" James Gandolfini reportedly makes $800,000 per episode. The new stars on "Scrubs" rate $350,000 per show. Keifer Sutherland makes $400,000 per episode of "24" and "CSI" leads each get $500,000 per telecast.

No wonder stars move heaven and earth to turn their shows into hits. The perks are really perky and their fees fly as high as their series' ratings.

On the *other* hand, some 80 percent of American actors don't even get to perform in a closet-sized theater most of the time, many TV pilot episodes aren't approved for airing, and most new programs that do get studio executives' nod get dismal ratings and don't even last one season.

What makes the few successful stars different from the many rejects? Producers and directors cite their winning combination of looks, youth, talent, charisma, discipline, ambition, "focused egos," versatility, "giving" attitude, good work ethic, connections, etc.

With the requirements as daunting as those, and with work prospects so tight, no wonder the stars who make the top ratings are rewarded so extravagantly for their pains.

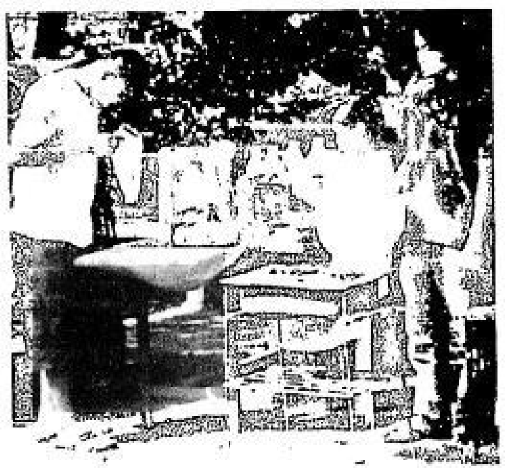
'Ocean's 13'

What do you do for an encore to an encore of a hit film? In the "Ocean's 13," stars George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia, Don Cheadle, Casey Affleck and Scott Caan have only one reason to pull off their most ambitious casino heist—to defend one of their own.

When ruthless casino owner Willy Bank (Al Pacino) double-crosses Elliot Gould's character, the gang teams up once more to see if it can break "the Bank."

Also re-teaming for the "sequel to a sequel" are director Steven Soderbergh and producer Jerry Weintraub.

OPENING THIS WEEK



Numbalikdiwa

Stars Maricel Soriano, Albert Martinez, Ping Medina, Meryl Soriano

Directed by Roberto Bonifacio Jr.

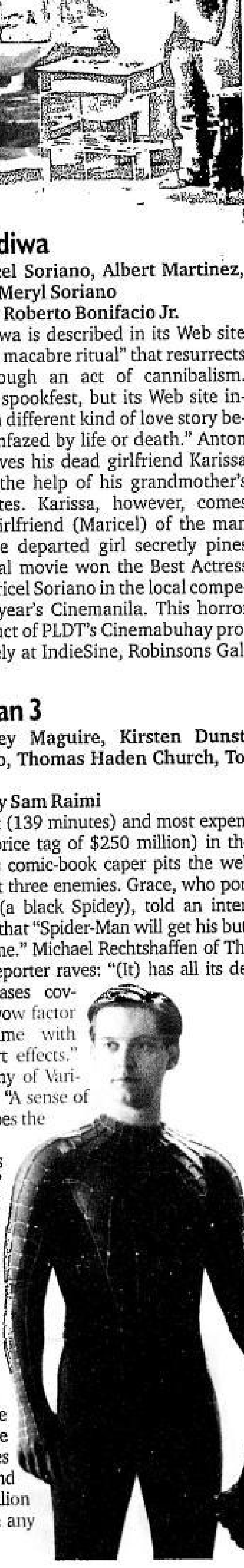
Numbalikdiwa is described in its Web site as "an ancient, macabre ritual" that resurrects the dead through an act of cannibalism. Sounds like a spookfest, but its Web site insists that it's "a different kind of love story between souls unfazed by life or death." Anton (Medina) revives his dead girlfriend Karissa (Meryl) with the help of his grandmother's mysterious rites. Karissa, however, comes back as the girlfriend (Maricel) of the man (Martinez) the departed girl secretly pines for. This digital movie won the Best Actress trophy for Maricel Soriano in the local competition of last year's Cinemanila. This horror flick is a product of PLDT's Cinemabuhay project. Exclusively at IndieSine, Robinsons Galleria.

Spider-Man 3

Stars Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, James Franco, Thomas Haden Church, Topher Grace

Directed by Sam Raimi

The longest (139 minutes) and most expensive (with a price tag of $250 million) in the franchise, this comic-book caper pits the web slinger against three enemies. Grace, who portrays Venom (a black Spidey), told an interviewer on TV that "Spider-Man will get his butt kicked this time." Michael Rechtshaffen of The Hollywood Reporter raves: "(It) has all its demographic bases covered ... the wow factor works overtime with state-of-the-art effects." Todd McCarthy of Variety disagrees: "A sense of strain envelopes the proceedings. Big problem is the script." Yoko Umeki of emanuellevy.com comments: "Despite narrative and tonal problems, this (installment) should score high if the $784 grosses of Part 1 and the $822 million of Part 2 are any indicators."



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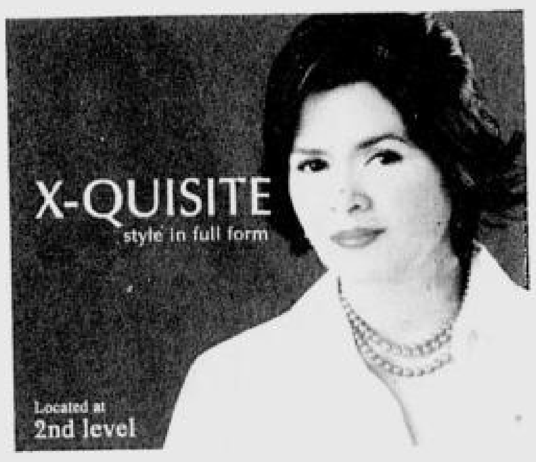
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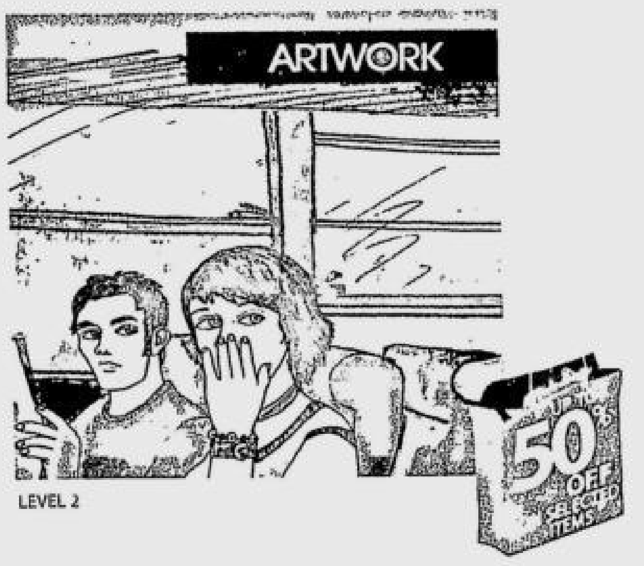
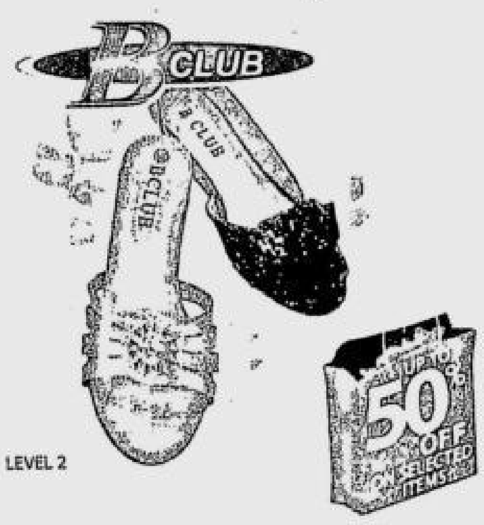

ARTWORK
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

LEVEL 2


B CLUB
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

LEVEL 2

Cabrelli
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

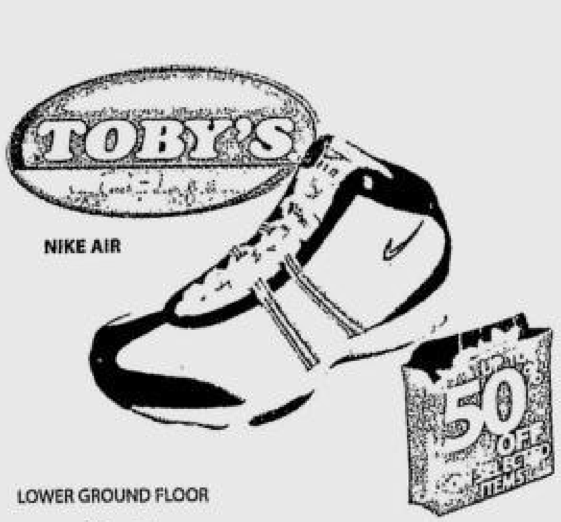
LEVEL 2

sportshouse
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

WILSON
PRO STAFF 1000

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

LEVEL 2


TOBY'S
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

NIKE AIR

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

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Flawless
FACE • BODY • MEDICAL
10% Discount
on Services
Except Idle treatment & Service Package

LEVEL 2

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THE ONE STOP FACIAL SALON
Awarded as
NO.1
Facial Salon
for Four consecutive years
BE BEAUTIFUL FOR A CAUSE
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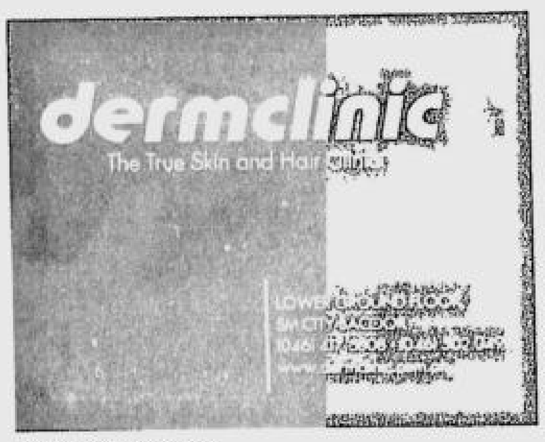
TEL.: (046)970-6829

LEVEL 2


dermclinic
The True Skin and Hair Clinic

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

gandang
Ricky Reyes
HAIR CUTTING

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

GOING STRAIGHT
Mother's Day
Summer Special
30%OFF
FROM APRIL 1 TO MAY 31, 2007
P1,820.00up
Hair Rebonding
P120.00up
Hair Straightening
P580.00up
Hair Relax

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

BLOW DRY
Salon de Rose
The Complete Beauty Services and
Facial Treatment for Men, Women & Kids

LEVEL 2

GORGEOUS MOM

Celebrate Mother's Day, May 13!

SM City BACOOR

ITTI SHOES
LEVEL
PROMOTIONAL SALE
"BUY ONE, TAKE TWO
PROMO RUNS UNTIL MAY 6, 2007
PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 1275 SERIES

THE BODY SHOP
UPPER GROUND FLOOR
OLIVE REDUCED PRICES FOR WATERMEL
LIP BALM & HOME FRAGRANCE.
FREE BODY CREAM FOR EVERY PURCHASE WO
PROMO RUNS UNTIL MAY 9, 2007
ER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO SERIES OF

Elvie's
FACIAL CLEANING

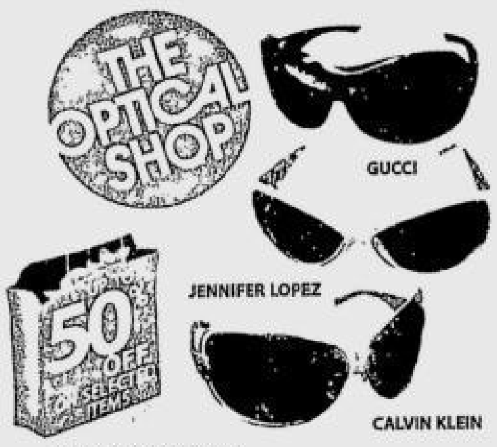
LOWER GROUND FLOOR

from
drab
to
fab!
Look beautiful this summer!
Before
freshairs

LEVEL 3

dermstrata
Skin Clinic & Spa
FACIAL CLEANING

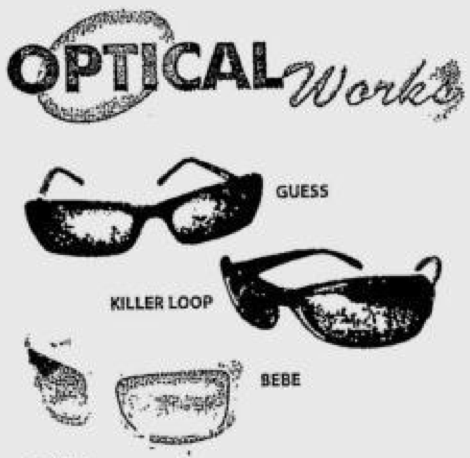
LEVEL 3


THE OPTICAL SHOP
GUCCI
JENNIFER LOPEZ
CALVIN KLEIN
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

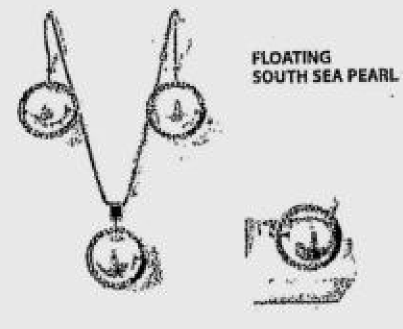
Prestige
TISSOT SEASTAR AUTOMATIC
UP TO 45% OFF SELECTED ITEMS

UPPER GROUND FLOOR


OPTICAL Works
GUESS
KILLER LOOP
BEBE

LEVEL 2

PINCTADA


FLOATING
SOUTH SEA PEARL SET

LEVEL 2

3day sale
marcella

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BROADWAY GEMS
LOWER GROUND FLOOR

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LADIES' BAG & CRYSTAL BEADS NECKLACE

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WIRELESS
Your Telecom Source
N73

LEVEL 3

Maging Sun Prepaid Retailer
P627 lang
May Instant Negosyo ka na!

Sa P627, makakakuha ka na ng:

- 1 Sun Xpress Load Retailer SIM
- P500 load sa Xpress Load Retailer Wallet
- 2 Sun Prepaid Super Value SIMs
- Retail merchandising materials

Available at: The SUN Shop

SUN CELLULAR PREPAID

LEVEL 3

BSD INTERNATIONAL
NOKIA N95

LEVEL 3

WELLCOM
TELECOM SUPERMARKET
ASUS J501

LEVEL 3

Novacell
N95

LEVEL 3

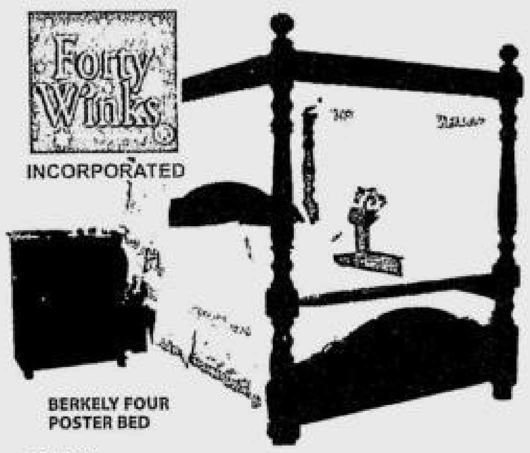
GAMES & GADGETS
NOKIA 5300

LEVEL 3

MUST-HAVES for MOM

Celebrate Mother's Day, May 13!

SM City BACOOR


Forty Winks
INCORPORATED

BERKELY FOUR POSTER BED

LEVEL 2

LEVEL 3

YAMAHA CLAVINOVA PIANO

SM CITY, BACOOR
TEL # (046) 417-3931 / (046) 417-3355
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- SUPERFERRY
- PASSPORTING
- HOTEL RESERVATION
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- INTERNATIONAL PACKAGES
- INTERNATIONAL CRUISES
- DOMESTIC TICKETING
- DOMESTIC PACKAGES
- VISA ASSISTANCE
- IMMIGRATION

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

QUANTUM
AMUSEMENT

Play your kind of game. Redeem your kind of stuff!

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HURRY!
RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows
UP TO 10% OFF SELECTED ITEMS
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Upper Ground Floor SM City Bacoor

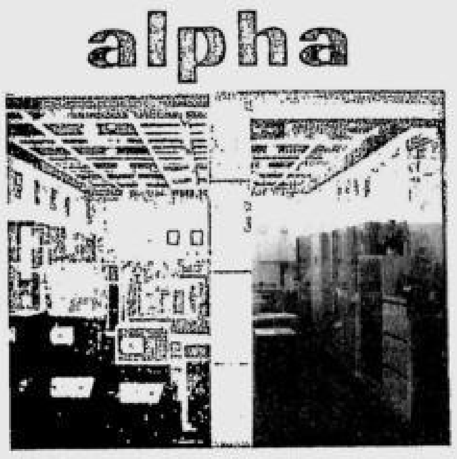
CAR TRUCK CENTER
QUALITY GUARANTEE
F-1 SPORT STEERING WHEEL
UP TO 50% OFF SELECTED ITEMS

MAXICAR SPORT STEERING WHEEL BASSKIT ADAPTOR

LOWER GROUND FLOOR

Netopia Internet Café
DIGITAL PHOTO PRINTING
Mother's day

LEVEL 3



LEVEL 3

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Chowking HaloHalo
Mas Pinasarap!

GROUND FLOOR

greenwich
CALL 5·55·55
GARANTISADO
ON TIME DELIVERY
IF WE'RE LATE, WE PAY YOU DOUBLE

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

ICE CREAM SHAKES
₱88
FRENCH

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

Just for Moms...
P899
FREE!
MALDITA

Celebrate Mother's Day with us...
and get a FREE GIFT*
when you avail ANY of our Set Menus

SWEET & SOUR PORK * 1/2 FRIED CHICKEN
TOFU & VEGETABLES IN OYSTER SAUCE
PANCIT CANTON * FRIED RICE * BUCHI
1 PITCHER ICED TEA

Promo Period: MAY 11 - 13, 2007

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

Woman of the year!
Goldilocks.

For 365 days of love, caring and support. Happy Mother's Day, Mom!

Ang Sarap Magmahal Ng Pinoy.

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

New! Salad Sensations
Always Fresh. Always Tasty.
Big Mandarin Chicken Salad
WENDY'S DELIVERS!
533-3333

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

EAT OUT with MOM

Celebrate Mother's Day, May 13!

SM City BACOOR

FOLLOW YOUR HUNGER
TOKYO TOKYO
SUMO MEALS

UPPER GROUND FLOOR

Special Charms for Precious Moms
Max's Restaurant

FREE! Bag charm for a min. purchase of ₱1,500.
Valid for dine-in only.

See Flyers for more details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 1345, series of 2007.

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Makeover Mission
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Get a chance to win one of the
4 Fabulous Fashion Makeovers
SM
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BDO
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FLOWERS EXPRESS

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

SEND YOUR SWEETEST GREETING TO YOUR MOM THIS MOTHER'S DAY.

ORDER A DOZEN ROSES AND GET A FREE VASE FROM FLOWERS EXPRESS

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You can be Glamorous, Mom.
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PHOTO / VIDEO COVERAGE

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This includes:

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LEVEL 3

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for, functional & practical
SILICON POWER media cards
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*Red Eye Reduction * 7 White Balance modes
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DIGICART F-70
SRP 5,995

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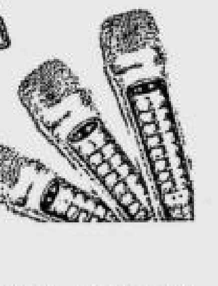
50% off on selected items
3 day SALE

may 4•5•6

mall hours 10am - 10pm

FILL UP RAFFLE COUPON OR TEXT SM TO 2366

& get a chance to WIN 1 OF 20 VERSION 9 VIDEOKE MICROPHONE



SM City BACOOR

SM SUPERMALLS

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